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MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND REIGN

OF

GEORGE THE FOURTH.

VOL. II.

M.M.d.16

H. Corbould del. E. Finden Sculp.

Prince Regent and Allied Sovereigns.

LONDON:
Printed for Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, & Green, Paternoster Row.
1831.

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THE

HISTORY

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MEMOIRS OF THE LIFE AND REIGN

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CHAP. XI.

1800—1803.

THE UNION. — RETIREMENT OF MR. PITT. — ADDINGTON MINISTRY. — DEBTS AND CLAIMS OF THE PRINCE OF WALES. — PEACE OF AMIENS. — RENEWAL OF THE WAR. — THREATENED INVASION. — THE PRINCE'S DEMAND OF PROMOTION IN THE ARMY.

THE incidents and companionships of youth no longer give relief or éclat to the personal history of the prince of Wales. Arrived at the thirty-eighth year of his age, he lived in a state of privacy and inaction, whilst the most important public events were passing around him. The government of France, it has been stated *, was changed by surprise and violence in 1799. A change less striking, but more permanent, was effected in the deliberative branch of English

* Chap. x.

government, in 1800, by that questionable power called the omnipotence of parliament.

There are subjects which should be treated fully, as well as freely, or not treated at all. On this account the Irish rebellion of 1798 has been passed over untouched. It will suffice to say, that in the course of that year the people in some parts of Ireland sought refuge from the dominion of free quarters, martial law, and the trial by torture, in open and armed rebellion; that the civil administration of lord Camden was superseded by the milder military government of lord Cornwallis; and that Mr. Pitt closed the scene by merging the Irish legislature in that of Great Britain.

The union was discussed in the parliament of Ireland with eloquence and integrity on both sides, but decided by corruption. Enormous sums offered and received as direct bribes were excusably infamous, compared with the corrupt barter of the judicial office to unprincipled and incompetent lawyers, who long continued to afflict that country. Another mischief was the traffic in titles, and the growth of a doubtful genus, belonging neither to the nobility, the gentry, nor the people — a sort of excrescence on the Irish peerage.

The legislative union was an obvious conception, but no common act of statesmanship. It is to be judged, not so much by what it has produced as by what it has prevented. The gratitude of his countrymen to the memory of Mr. Pitt should be measured by the value which they set upon the connection with Ireland. He who now supposes that there was any escape between union and ulti-

mate, perhaps speedy, separation, is uninformed or insincere.

In the British parliament, the union was opposed by the friends of the prince of Wales; and an opinion prevailed that he was himself adverse to it. But that impression, true or false, would naturally be encouraged. He was under obligations to the parliament of which the existence was at stake. A severe observer of the ethical realities of life may, it is true, couple obligation and ingratitude as cause and effect — especially in a prince; but the prince of Wales valued his Irish popularity, and on the question of the union appeared at least neutral.

The French republic, after the revolution of the 18th Brumaire, existed only in chains at the feet of a successful soldier. Bonaparte was not long invested with the dictatorship, when he made overtures for peace in a well-known letter addressed directly to George III. His letter has the frankness, simplicity, brevity, and elevation of the republican, with the courtesies of the royal style; and, affecting to discard the artifices of diplomacy, it is a master-piece of diplomatic skill.* George III.

* " Appelé par les vœux de la nation Française à occuper la première magistrature de la république, je crois convenable en entrant en charge, d'en faire directement part à Votre Majesté.

" La guerre qui, depuis huit ans, ravage les quatre parties du monde, doit-elle être éternelle? N'est-il aucun moyen de s'entendre?

" Comment les deux nations les plus éclairées de l'Europe, puissantes et fortes plus que ne l'exigent leur sûreté et leur indépendance, peuvent-elles sacrifier à des idées de vaine grandeur le bien du commerce, la prospérité, le bonheur des fa-

did not deign to answer this unanointed epistle; but lord Grenville addressed to the French minister, Talleyrand, a reply unworthy of his talents and character. The English minister's diffuse state paper — supercilious without dignity, and disingenuous without adroitness — set forth in substance that the king was ever desirous of peace, and then ready to negotiate — provided only that Bonaparte would acknowledge himself unfit to be treated with, abdicate his power, and restore the power and persons of the Bourbons in France!

The letter of Bonaparte was regarded by some as an eager attempt to take his place among sovereigns. Were that his motive, he would have felt the rebuff too sensibly to repeat his overture, as he did through Talleyrand, without the least sign of mortification. It is still less probable that he was

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milles? Comment ne sentent-elles pas que la paix est le premier des besoins comme la première des gloires?

" Ces sentimens ne peuvent pas être étrangers au cœur de Votre Majesté, qui gouverne une nation libre et dans le seul but de la rendre heureuse.

" Votre Majesté ne verra dans cette ouverture que mon désir sincère de contribuer efficacement, pour la seconde fois, à la pacification générale, par une démarche prompte, toute de confiance, et dégagée de ces formes qui, nécessaires peut-être pour déguiser la dépendance des états faibles, ne décèlent dans les états forts que le desir mutuel de se tromper.

" La France, l'Angleterre, par l'abus de leurs forces, peuvent long-temps encore pour le malheur de tous les peuples, en retarder l'épuisement; mais, j'ose le dire, le sort de toutes les nations civilisées est attaché à la fin d'une guerre qui embrase le monde entier.

" De Votre Majesté, etc. etc.

" BONAPARTE."

sincerely desirous of peace. The republic, during his absence in Egypt, had suffered less in its resources than military reputation. To restore the latter must have been the object nearest to his heart, as a matter of policy and feeling. His overture, therefore, was but a clever manœuvre, by which he threw upon England all the odium of continued war. "Those people," said he to Talleyrand, "could not have done better for our interests; they would have greatly embarrassed us by moderation."*

The English ministers are blameable, not for doubting the sincerity of Bonaparte, but for playing his game. They might have embarrassed him by peace, or thrown upon him his share of the responsibility of prolonging the calamities of war. Success, that great redresser of human folly, would scarcely have excused the rashness with which they disdained negotiation, and the confidence with which they anticipated victory. What must have been the effect of failure?

That fantastic or insane personage, the emperor Paul, upon whose Christian zeal and imperial virtues George III. pronounced a self-debasing eulogy from the throne, suddenly became the admirer of Bonaparte, abandoned the confederacy, proved himself the especial enemy of England, outraged the persons, and plundered the goods of British subjects within his reach. The court of Vienna, intoxicated with the successes of the preceding year, and with

* Ces gens là ne pouvaient rien faire de mieux pour nos intérêts; ils nous eussent fort embarrassés en montrant de la modération.—*Mém. de St. Hélène.*

the flattering assurances of the British minister, lord Minto, rejected peace, like the cabinet of London.

Bonaparte crossed the Alps, broke the sceptre of the German empire in the plain of Marengo, granted an armistice to the emperor, and returned to Paris, under a succession of triumphal arches from the frontier to the capital. What was his main auxiliary in this brilliant achievement? The insulting rejection of his overtures by the English government. He published lord Grenville's reply, and France rose at his call, with (to use an expression of Montesquieu) the strength of a nation, and the energy of a faction.*

Persuaded by the eloquence of lord Minto, and an English subsidy, the emperor resumed hostilities, received another terrific overthrow at Hohenlinden, and concluded the separate and famous treaty of Luneville, which left England without an ally.

The first session of the imperial parliament was

* His address on the occasion to the French people begins as follows: —

"Français! — Vous désirez la paix: votre gouvernement la désire avec plus d'ardeur encore. Ses premiers vœux, ses démarches constantes, ont été pour elle. Le ministère Anglais la repousse; le ministère Anglais a trahi le secret de son horrible politique. Déchirer la France, détruire sa marine et ses ports, l'effacer du tableau de l'Europe, ou l'abaisser au rang des puissances secondaires, tenir toutes les nations du continent divisées, pour s'emparer du commerce de toutes et s'enrichir de leurs dépouilles, c'est pour obtenir ces affreux succès que l'Angleterre répand l'or, prodigue les promesses, et multiplie ses intrigues."

opened on the 22d of January, 1801. The changes made in the heraldic style and ensigns of the two kingdoms now united into one, of the parliament, and of the sovereign, marked it as a new æra. Mr. Pitt must have regarded the spectacle with pride. But this only measure of his long career which can be called historic, led directly to his retirement. He had purchased the co-operation of the Irish catholics by the promise of catholic emancipation in a united parliament; and, finding that he could not carry this important and integral part of the measure of union into effect, he retired.* This is the explanation given by Mr. Pitt and his colleagues, in parliament, and in two anonymous, but authoritative papers circulated among the leading Irish catholics — one known to proceed from Mr. Pitt, the other from lord Cornwallis.

His retirement, however, was pronounced a deep juggle, to give his successor and confederate the opportunity of concluding a peace which he could not conclude without humiliation, and of repairing errors which he now saw, but was too proud to acknowledge.

Mr. Pitt, at the moment of his resignation, had to contend with the disappointment of his plans and policy abroad — scarcity of subsistence, distress, discontent, and an increased desire for peace.

* The king says in his letter on this subject to Mr. Pitt, "that his inclination to an union was principally founded on a trust that it would shut the door for ever to any further measures with respect to the Roman catholics." This discrepancy between the king and the minister proves extreme want of mutual confidence, or extreme duplicity on one side.

at home. But he was not a minister whom even this situation could daunt. The plans and means in preparation or actual execution, which he handed over to his successor, prove that fear of the enemy and of the event could have had no share in his retreat. The expedition to Egypt was already on its way. A powerful naval force, destined to break the armed neutrality of the north, was equipped. The victory of Copenhagen, which shed its lustre upon the succeeding ministry, was organized by him. The whole force of the united kingdom, military and naval, already voted before he resigned, amounted to the unprecedented number of 438,000 men. In spite of past disasters and present difficulties, therefore, he was prepared to continue the war with unabated vigour and increased resources.

It is possible that Mr. Pitt contemplated, not his retirement, but the attainment of his object, when he offered his resignation. But an antagonist influence was in the mean time used with the king. The religion of George III., even when his faculties were unimpaired by age or malady, was unenlightened, mechanical, and ostentatious. Without being insincere, he made a self-complacent display of formal observances. When the sacrament was about to be administered to him at his coronation, he stopped suddenly, took off his crown, placed it on the altar, went through the rite, and then replaced the bauble on his head. This was proclaimed as an act of devout humility. It may be presumed on the contrary, that a person strongly impressed with the sentiment of devotion would have thought only of God, and forgotten at the moment that he wore

his crown. The success of this first theatric stroke seems never to have been forgotten by him. His high estimate of his own devotion increased with his years. It was the chief subject of his raving in 1789.* He believed, or was represented as believing, his recovery at that period a special favour of Divine Providence. "Nothing," says the bishop of Winchester, speaking of the service at St. Paul's, "was so striking as the earnest and uninterrupted devotion of his majesty, manifestly proceeding from a heart truly sensible of a recent and gracious interposition of Divine Providence." There is, it may be observed, something truly jesuitical in the dexterous ambiguity of phrase employed by the right reverend historian.

This peculiar cast of mind in the king rendered him accessible to the suggestions of bigotry and intrigue. The union brought over to England men who would have done honour to the proudest senate, but quartered upon her, at the same time, the late lords Castlereagh and Clare. Lord Castlereagh, a flexible politician, without principles or emotions, concurred with the minister on the question of emancipating the catholics. Lord Clare, arrogant, fearless, disappointed, and intolerant, maintained the necessity of the popery laws. Accustomed to domineer in Ireland, he found himself rebuked to his level by the British peerage †, and disregarded by the British cabinet. He formed an alliance, under the auspices of the late duke of York, with the Jenkin-

* See admiral Payne's letters, in Moore's Life of Sheridan.

† See Parliamentary Debates, for the castigation inflicted upon him by Francis duke of Bedford, in the house of peers.

son party, was introduced by the back stairs to the closet at Buckingham House, and partly alarmed, partly flattered the conscience of George III. into the notion that by emancipating the catholics he should violate his coronation oath.

Mr. Pitt well knew, since 1795, the king's objections to the repeal of the disqualifying laws against catholics and dissenters, but still hoped to change his opinion, and would probably have succeeded if he were not thus counteracted. It is obvious, even from Mr. Pitt's part of the correspondence already mentioned, that he well knew, and did not conceal his knowledge of the fact, that there were other persons closer to the king's ear. The king, however, tried to cajole him by a sort of compromise, in pursuance of which the minister "should" (to use the royal phraseology) "stave off the question, and the king would abstain from talking on the subject nearest his heart,"—with this curious reservation, that "he (the king) could not help if others pretended to guess at his opinions."* Mr. Pitt, declining this flimsy pledge, requested to be relieved from his office with the least possible delay; and Mr. Addington, then speaker of the house of commons, was placed at the head of an administration, which made up in religious bigotry for the want of political character.

Mr. Addington, on his appointment, waited on the prince of Wales, and informed him of the change in his majesty's counsels. The prince declared "that though he had not been consulted in the new ar-

* Letters of George III. to Mr. Pitt on the coronation oath.

rangements, he yet should take no part in opposition to those who were chosen by the king." It seems probable that he only consoled his pride by affecting to be neutral, when he was really powerless. An unexpected incident produced the greatest change in his political situation. The excitement or exertion of mind attendant upon the change of ministry affected the king's health. His indisposition was understood to be a return of his former illness, but not so serious as to be publicly declared. The new arrangements were suspended: Mr. Pitt and his colleagues continued provisionally to perform the duties of their respective offices. The worship of expectant eyes was again turned to the heir apparent. Mr. Fox came to London from St. Anne's Hill, presided at a meeting of the Whig Club, deprecated any allusion to the illness of the king, and declared that, still despairing of the house of commons, if he re-appeared in parliament, it should only be to support the motion for an enquiry into the state of the nation, of which notice had been given by his friend Mr. Grey.

The occasional visits of Mr. Fox to London since his retirement had hitherto created no sensation; but now the drawing-room of lord Fitzwilliam, at whose house he resided during his stay in town, was crowded with visitors, in the expectation of his becoming minister of the regent or of George IV. The king's recovery put an end to speculations, and the Addington ministry began its short and feeble career.

The new government commenced in a tone of conciliating modesty, of which it had need. Lord

St. Vincent, appointed to the Admiralty, was the only person who brought to it a distinguished reputation; but he soon proved himself better qualified for a naval commander than for a minister. Mr. Addington himself, without superior capacity or high rank, was unqualified to be either the efficient or pageant chief of a ministry. Lord Hawkesbury, who even as lord Liverpool has never risen above a certain decorous and disarming mediocrity, became, for the first time, a leading minister, as successor of lord Grenville. Lord Eldon, whose learning as a judge has been both noxious and over-rated, and who had no one qualification for the cabinet, was appointed to direct the king's conscience, and the machinery of ruin in the court of chancery.

The countenance given by Mr. Pitt to his successors favoured the opinion that his retreat was but a temporary manœuvre.* His knowledge of the men must have convinced him that the ministry could not hold; and he but secured his return to power by this hollow support, which, without strengthening the cabinet, satisfied the king. The conduct of lord Grenville was more frank and consistent: he managed no opening for his return to office by compromise or intrigue. His errors as a minister became respectable in the eyes even of his opponents, when it appeared that they proceeded from his principles, and not from the love of place or power.

* An expression in the king's letter accepting Mr. Pitt's resignation may also be understood in this sense: "I will, without unnecessary delay, attempt to make the most creditable arrangement, *and such as Mr. Pitt will think most to the advantage of my service.*"

The war was continued with unabated energy for near six months after the retirement of Mr. Pitt, without the slightest glimpse of approaching peace. Bonaparte prepared a naval armament of flat-bottomed boats on the coast of France, for the avowed purpose of invading the United Kingdom, and the nation was once more armed. But during almost the whole of this time there was an invisible undercurrent of negotiation. Lord Hawkesbury, on the 21st of March, 1801, made an overture to M. Otto, who resided in England as agent for the exchange of prisoners. The communication was immediately forwarded to the first consul, and, after some discussion, it was resolved to settle the preliminaries by a secret negotiation.

The concurrent events of the war affected the negociations favourably to England. Sir Ralph Abercrombie, at the head of the Egyptian expedition, defeated the French in the first engagement after landing, and was mortally wounded. His successor, general Hutchinson, created Lord Hutchinson for his brilliant services in this campaign, completely dispossessed the French of Egypt. Another great blow was struck during the negotiations by the victory of Copenhagen. The valour of the Danes in this action could not be greater, but was really more surprising than that of Nelson and the British seamen: they fought with heroic bravery, in spite of two enervating causes operating upon them for several generations — absolute government, and peace. The result of this battle, combined with the assassination of the emperor Paul and the suc-

cession of Alexander, put an end to the armed neutrality of the northern powers.

Lord Nelson's failure in his attack upon the flotilla at Boulogne, on the other hand, tended to disenchant the British navy, and its most renowned chief, of their invincibility; but it proved the French armament an idle mockery, secured against attack, and fixed to the shore.

The preliminary articles of peace were proclaimed to the world on the 1st of October, 1801. All Europe, and especially England and France, hailed the news with transports of joy. The belligerent and neutral nations, the interests of humanity and commerce, were alike concerned in the event. Lord Cornwallis, appointed to conclude the definitive treaty, was received at Paris by the people with the liveliest expressions of national respect, by the government with extraordinary honours; and the conferences at Amiens, after having proceeded slowly and doubtfully, ended in the conclusion of peace on the 22d of March, 1802.

The British nation, at the signature of the preliminaries, thought only of the blessings of peace, and not at all of its conditions. A change of opinion took place in the interval which preceded the signature of the definitive treaty. The preliminary terms were reprobated with the force of argument, eloquence, indignation, and personal authority by a small but most respectable party in the house of lords. At the head of this opposition were lords Grenville, Spencer, and Fitzwilliam. The same course was taken by Mr. T. Grenville, Mr. Windham,

and a few other members of this party in the house of commons. But the minister, on a division, had an overwhelming majority, for which he was indebted to a novel and curious combination of parties. The regular opposition voted a sort of contemptuous acquiescence. Mr. Fox said, a glorious peace was not to be expected after an inglorious war. In expressing his satisfaction that one object of the war — the restoration of the Bourbons — had failed, he displayed a trait of sagacity and statesmanship which may now be called prophetic. "It is to me," said he, "a recommendation of the peace, that it has been obtained without the restoration of the Bourbons. I am fully convinced that if the Bourbons were restored, the consequence would be a concerted guarantee between all the monarchs of Europe, against any people which might be oppressed by any of them in any part of the world."* Is not this prediction most exactly fulfilled in the holy alliance?

By far the most remarkable advocate of the peace and its conditions was Mr. Pitt. He spoke as if he had wholly forgotten his own views and principles in the conduct of the war and of three several negotiations. His capacity at this time appears either prematurely worn, or enervated during his retirement. There is a certain unsteadiness and weakness in the march of his ideas which no illusion of authority or pomp of words can disguise.† The terms of this short-lived yet memorable peace were really open to censure — they were unequal and insecure. The supremacy of Europe was surrendered to France for some colonial acquisitions. But repose was the

* Fox's Speeches. † See his Speech.

first want of the nation, and the peace was acquiesced in.

The prince of Wales took no part in these important transactions. He was, however, on good terms with the ministry, at least during the first year of its existence. Mr. Pitt had been inexorable to every suggestion of relief to the prince; though, since the last arrangement of his income, on his marriage, he was paying his creditors annually 70,000*l.* out of his income of 120,000*l.* a year. In 1801, the new minister sanctioned or advised an increase of 8000*l.* a year by way of loan, to be repaid when the whole of his debts should be liquidated, and his income disengaged. The prince, however, was by no means satisfied, and his friends contrasted once more the rigour exercised towards him with the flagrant prodigality of the civil list.

Early in the session of 1802, a message from the king acquainted both houses that the civil list was in arrear, and recommended the subject to his faithful lords and commons. Lord Fitzwilliam moved a previous enquiry, and lord Holland said he saw no reason why a certain portion of the civil list should not be set aside as a sinking fund, to pay the king's debts, as in the case of the prince of Wales. Mr. Fox took the same course in the house of commons. One novel head of expenditure in the civil list, stated by ministers, under the name of "occasional payments," excited severe and suspicious animadversions. This designation was an obvious and even clumsy disguise for corrupt influence and personal favouritism. The message was complied with by sweeping majorities; but a very frank and energetic

protest was entered by lords Caernarvon, Dundas, Fitzwilliam, and Holland.

Advantage was taken of the sensation created by this debate in favour of the prince of Wales. Mr. Manners Sutton, solicitor-general to the prince, brought under the consideration of the house of commons the prince's claim to the revenues of the duchy of Cornwall during his minority. This claim had been suspended *in terrorem* over the ministry — or more properly over the king—ever since 1787; and a petition of right on behalf of the prince of Wales had lain six years in the court of chancery, without a hearing. Lord Loughborough, from those influences which must always be felt where the same man is both a cabinet minister and removable judge, or perhaps from an unwillingness to let the father and son exhibit themselves as adverse parties in a case of pecuniary litigation in his court, refused to put the prince's claim in the ordinary train of adjudication. Mr. Manners Sutton now said, the prince's object in appealing to the house was to set himself right with the public, by showing that if his claim had not been withheld, his debts, whether incurred prudently or otherwise, would still have been no burthen to the people. He then argued with, if not unanswerable, at least unanswered force, that the king had no right to appropriate the hereditary revenues of the heir apparent, without rendering him an account on his coming of age. Mr. Fox and the opposition supported the prince's claim.

The only answer given by the ministers and law officers of the crown was the trite one, that the king had a right to indemnify himself, by the appropria-

tion of these revenues, for the expenses of the education and maintenance of his eldest son. Even admitting this deplorable plea, it would not exempt the king from the obligation as guardian to render an account. The case was still stronger against him: he had transgressed his powers as guardian by letting the prince's estates at long leases, on account of which he received large sums in fines.* The prince's case made such an impression upon the house of commons, that the order of the day, moved by Mr. Addington, was carried by a majority of only 160 to 103. A still stronger sense of the injustice with which he had been treated pervaded the country.

In about a month after, a communication on the subject was made to the house of commons on the part of the prince of Wales. Mr. Tyrwhit, an officer of his household, stated for the satisfaction of the house that the claims of the prince were put into a train of adjudication on his petition of right, and took the opportunity of mentioning that the prince had discharged debts to the amount of 525,000*l.* since 1795.

The ministers of the crown, and the majority of the house of commons, by rejecting the motion of Mr. Manners Sutton, on the ground of its involving a strictly legal question, not only drove the prince of Wales to the assertion of his claim in the court of chancery, but forced the new chancellor (Eldon) to entertain it. Accordingly the prince's petition was now proceeding in due course. But the king and the ministers either felt ashamed of their situa-

* He had procured the legal sanction of an act of parliament, but the morality of the transaction remained unchanged.

tion or alarmed for the result, and this shifting and sordid squabble terminated.

Early in the succeeding session (1802-3) Mr. Addington delivered a message from the king, recommending a yearly grant, not exceeding 60,000*l.*, from the 5th of January, 1803, to the 5th of July, 1806, towards providing for the better support and dignity of the prince of Wales: Mr. Manners Sutton at the same time informed the house that the prince of Wales had abandoned his claim of right on the revenues of the duchy of Cornwall, "in order to preserve the harmony which should always subsist between him and his royal father." Colonel Stanley asked whether the abandonment of the claim on the one side, and the royal message on the other, were the result of a compromise. This was denied both by Mr. Manners Sutton and Mr. Addington; but that a compromise, tacit or express, had substantially taken place was palpable and notorious, and asserted in his place by Sheridan. The resolution moved by Mr. Addington in pursuance of the message was unanimously agreed to.

A communication from the prince of Wales, delivered to the house of commons on the 28th of February, expressed his gratitude for the liberality of parliament, but acquainted the house that he had still claims upon him, both in honour and justice, which, notwithstanding the grant, would render it impossible for him to resume his state. In short, it proved that though he had discharged his old he had contracted new debts. Mr. Calcraft, disclaiming any concert with the prince, or authority from him, and professing to act only as an individual

member of the house, moved the appointment of a select committee to consider the amount of those new claims. The previous question moved as an amendment, and supported by the ministers, was carried, after an animated debate, by a majority of only 184 to 139. Mr. Fox and the whig opposition supported the prince on these several occasions with an earnestness which proved that they were on friendly terms with him.

Public attention was soon absorbed by the foreign relations of the country. It became apparent that the peace of Amiens was not made to endure. Lord Whitworth and general Andreossi represented the British and French governments at Paris and London; an active interchange of state papers was commenced, and mutual complaint was soon exasperated to mutual accusation. The main point in dispute was the refusal of England to deliver up Malta in pursuance of her engagements. This question is too comprehensive, and perhaps irrelevant, to be entered on here. It may be observed, in passing, that the treaty was one which could not last. It left several important and obvious cases wholly unprovided for—those, for instance, of Switzerland, Piedmont, and Tuscany. The reader, who compares it with the then existing interests and relations of the parties, will meet as many *lacunæ* as in an ancient manuscript.

It is singular, that whilst the British nation has a character for frankness and fair dealing, the British government has an European reputation for Machiavelian policy. The publicists and historians of the continent generally, and those of France, without

exception, have treated the omissions in the treaty of Amiens as designed by the British cabinet to supply convenient pretexts for returning to a state of war; and the ministry of that day seems really placed between the alternatives of bad faith and incapacity.

Bonaparte had openly become president of the Cisalpine republic during the negotiations. His invasion of the independence of Switzerland, his annexation of Piedmont to France, his virtual supremacy over Italy, were perfectly consistent with the stipulations of the treaty. It is true that his conduct manifested a spirit of ambition and aggrandisement; but those who then constituted the British ministry should have been the very last to calculate on his moderation, or to plead their confidence in him as an excuse.

One of the griefs urged against the French government was the publication of an official report made by colonel Sebastiani, who had been commissioned to make a survey in the Levant, especially with reference to the evacuation of Egypt. Nothing could be more trivial than this document, viewed as a cause of war between two great nations—except the trivial justification put forward by the French government. Sir Robert Wilson, descending from his character of a soldier to that of a scribbling partisan, had published a pamphlet upon Egypt; and the French ambassador, Andreossi, declared that it became necessary to publish the report of colonel Sebastiani, as a vindication of the French army and the first consul in the eyes of Europe from the calumnies of colonel Wilson. War appeared morally

certain in the month of March, 1803. The first gun was fired, and a French vessel was captured off Brest, by an English frigate on the 18th of May. Bonaparte reproached the English government with a violation of the law of nations in commencing hostilities before a declaration of war, and retaliated by detaining as prisoners of war all British subjects liable to military service then within his power, seizing Hanover, and occupying both Holland and Naples.

The threat of invasion was once more held out by Bonaparte, and a flotilla of gun-boats collected at Boulogne. Both the menace and the armament were regarded as vain demonstrations; but the country was placed in a state of imposing and secure defence. A levy *en masse*, which had been resolved on, was rendered unnecessary by the zeal and numbers of the volunteers. The ministry, without possessing the confidence of either the parliament or the country, was strenuously seconded by both.

At this moment of patriotic and military ardour, the prince of Wales renewed with increased perseverance his solicitations for military rank. A long correspondence took place on the subject between the prince, Mr. Addington, the king, and the duke of York, commander-in-chief. The tone of the prince's letters is earnest, and even indignant, but they are known to be the composition of others.* As the whole correspondence may be easily referred to†, it is unnecessary to introduce

* The writers are supposed to have been sir Robert Wilson and lord Hutchinson.

† See Ann. Reg.

here the letters of the prince. He first addressed himself to Mr. Addington; that minister laid his letter before the king, who, in reply, through Mr. Addington, merely referred to a former refusal *, declared his opinion fixed, and desired that no further mention should be made to him on the subject. Notwithstanding this peremptory message, expressed with a laconic despotism of style, the prince addressed himself directly to his father: "no other cause of refusal," says he, "has been or can be assigned except that it was the will of your majesty." The king replied to this letter by referring to his "repeated declarations," and telling the prince he might distinguish himself as colonel of a regiment of dragoons: "Should," says the king, "the implacable enemy so far succeed as to land, you will have an opportunity of showing your zeal at the head of your regiment." The prince in rejoinder says, "My next brother, the duke of York, commands the army, the younger branches of my family are either generals or lieutenant-generals, and I, who am prince of Wales, am to remain a colonel of dragoons! There is something so humiliating in the contrast, that those who are at a distance would doubt the reality, or suppose that to be my fault which is only my misfortune." In a letter to the duke of York, he calls "the opportunity of displaying his zeal at the head of his regiment," with which his father had consoled him, "a degrading mockery."

The prince was treated with injustice and indignity. It were vain to search for the king's motive

* See Vol. I. p. 297.

in any mistaken principle of government or reason of state, and least of all in any weak regard for his son's personal safety. The real source was in the king's character and habitual jealous hatred of his eldest son and successor.

At the period of this correspondence, and for a considerable time before, all personal intercourse had ceased between the king and the prince of Wales. The prince's letters, though profuse of respect and duty as a son and subject, and appealing forcibly to the paternal heart, are yet consistent with the actual relations between him and his father. But the king's epistle, more ingeniously dramatised, affects the tenderness and familiarity of the paternal style.

The correspondence closes with a letter, not relating precisely to the same subject, from lord Sidmouth to the prince of Wales, and the prince's reply. Lord Sidmouth, in consequence of intelligence which had just reached him, but without communicating its nature, requested of the prince not to proceed to Brighton. The prince in answer said that, if the intelligence related, as he presumed, to some attempt of the enemy, "he was bound by the king's precise order, and by that honest zeal which is not allowed any fitter sphere for its action, to hasten instantly to his regiment;" and therefore "he must deem it necessary to proceed to Brighton immediately." The prince's letter to Mr. Addington is dated October 23d, and on the 26th the volunteer corps of London, 12,500 strong, were reviewed by the king in Hyde Park. The king on this occasion was accompanied by the queen and other

members of the royal family, except the prince of Wales, who was absent most probably in consequence of his father's alienation, the refusal of military promotion, and the mortification of appearing on the ground as a colonel of dragoons, whilst the duke of York figured as commander-in-chief, and the dukes of Kent, Cumberland, and Cambridge as lieutenant-generals.

CHAP. XII.

1804—1806-7.

LAST MINISTRY AND DEATH OF MR. PITT. — MINISTRY OF MR. FOX. — DELICATE INVESTIGATION. — DEATH OF MR. FOX. — CHANGE OF MINISTRY.

THE king early in February, 1804, was again seriously indisposed. No doubt was entertained of his suffering a recurrence of his former, and it may now be called habitual, malady. Threatened with invasion by a powerful armament from the opposite coast, and placed in the hands of the most feeble administration to which its destinies had yet been confided, the country was agitated and alarmed at this sudden incompetency of the sovereign. His illness continued avowedly from the 14th of February to the 14th of March, when the lord chancellor declared that "the king was in such a state as to warrant the lords commissioners in giving the royal assent to several bills." A further proof of his convalescence was given by his appearance in public, and by the change of his ministers early in May.

Mr. Addington had established himself completely in the king's confidence. His congenial intolerance

in matters of religion, and the conciliating weakness of his capacity and character, recommended him to George III. But after the signature of the peace of Amiens, he and his colleagues lost ground every day with parliament and the public. They had to contend against two oppositions, called the old and new; headed, the one by Mr. Fox, the other by lord Grenville. Mr. Pitt had given the ministers an inconsistent and barren support during the discussions of the peace, while some of his most attached and admiring friends opposed them. Mr. Canning teased the Addingtons in, and still more effectually out of parliament, by an incessant warfare of wit, ridicule, and personality. Mr. Pitt, after first sinking into languid approval, and then withdrawing himself for a short time, re-appeared in direct and vehement opposition. Opinion was divided on the motives of his conduct. It was said that he became alarmed at Mr. Addington's complete and exclusive possession of the royal confidence, and especially provoked by the appointment of Mr. Tierney to the treasurership of the navy. This appointment was regarded as a defiance of Mr. Pitt, to whom Mr. Tierney was particularly obnoxious, and branded by Mr. Pitt's friends with ingratitude on the part of Mr. Addington.

The weak point of the ministry was the administration of the navy. Lord St. Vincent, acting upon false notions of economy, had reduced the naval force of the kingdom from the extensive scale and complete organisation to which it had been raised by lord Spencer; and a lord of the admiralty (captain Markham) compromised the government

and himself in the house of commons, by either gross ignorance, or very indiscreet colouring of fact. Mr. Addington having now to contend with three distinct oppositions, combined under Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, and lord Grenville, was reduced to feeble majorities, resigned his office, and was immediately succeeded by Mr. Pitt, whose appointment as first commissioner of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer appeared in the Gazette on the 12th of May.

The nation had hoped to see a government composed of the leading men of the leading parties, — Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, and lord Grenville — whose united talent, character, and experience should inspire confidence, and give strength at a moment of unexampled public danger. The mutual relations and feelings of the parties, and of the individuals, at the moment, promised this result. But the king pronounced sentence of exclusion upon Mr. Fox; lord Grenville with his friends declined becoming parties to this principle*; and Mr. Pitt placed himself at the head of a cabinet substantially recruited from the preceding. It appears to have been the opinion of Mr. Pitt's friends, and his own, that he could achieve every thing by his single prowess. This opinion was expressly and eloquently avowed by Mr. Canning in parliament, during a discussion upon the army estimates, in 1802: — "Look at France;

* "We rest our determination solely on our strong sense of the impropriety of our becoming parties to a system of government, which is to be formed at such a moment as the present on a principle of exclusion."

Letter of Lord Grenville to Mr. Pitt.

and see what we have to cope with; consider what has made her what she is. *A man.* You will tell me that she was great, and powerful, and formidable before the date of Bonaparte's government; that he found in her great physical and moral resources; that he had but to turn them to account. True, and he did so. Compare the situation in which he found France with that to which he has raised her. I am no panegyrist of Bonaparte; but I cannot shut my eyes to the superiority of his talents, to the amazing ascendant of his genius. Tell me not of his measures, and his policy. It is his genius, his character, that keeps the world in awe. Sir, to meet, to check, to curb, to stand up against him, we want arms of the same kind. I am far from objecting to the large military establishments which are proposed to you; I vote for them with all my heart: but, for the purpose of coping with Bonaparte, one great commanding spirit is worth them all."

Mr. Pitt was censured for yielding to the king's hatred of the principles and person of Mr. Fox, and to a principle of government abhorrent to the constitution. But his situation was delicate. The king had appeared in public for the first time since his illness only two days before Mr. Pitt's appointment was announced in the Gazette, and his convalescence was so precarious, that the usual report of convicts under sentence of death was delayed for some months. Discussion and excitement might have produced melancholy consequences. On the other hand, the safety of a great empire was at stake; and it may be questioned whether duty to the nation,

and humanity to the sovereign, would not have been best consulted and reconciled by relieving George III. at that moment from awful responsibilities under which his mind was momentarily liable to break down. No direct proposition, however, for the appointment of a regent was made, and, in compliance with suggestions of delicacy, the precise nature of the king's illness was not formally declared.

Mr. Pitt retained of the Addington ministry the duke of Portland, lords Eldon, Westmoreland, Chatham, Castlereagh, and Hawkesbury, forming a majority of his cabinet. Two of these, the duke of Portland and lord Westmoreland, were thrown upon him by reversion; and a third, lord Chatham, was his brother. He brought in with him lords Melville, Harrowby, and Camden. A seat in the cabinet, with the chancellorship of the duchy of Lancaster, was given to lord Mulgrave. Mr. Canning was a powerful auxiliary in debate; but that incubus upon political freedom and individual talent in the existing system of British government, called oligarchy, shut him out from a seat in the cabinet, and condemned him to the subordinate place of treasurer of the navy. That surely was a most vicious principle of government which kept down Mr. Canning, at the precious stage of life in which manhood has gained experience without losing vigour, whilst it made cabinet ministers of lords Castlereagh and Hawkesbury.

It was scarcely possible for any single talent to make head against opposition at home, and the power of the enemy abroad, with such an administration; and it soon proved that Mr. Pitt was no longer the "great commanding spirit" invoked by

Mr. Canning. He should have closed his political, perhaps his mortal, life when he had carried the union, and sacrificed office to his public duty and individual pledge. On that day "Diagoras should have died." The world would then have given him exaggerated credit for his administration, and lent imaginary splendour to what his talents would achieve, had he lived. But his genius seems to have deserted him with his seals of office in 1801, and not to have returned with them in 1804. His support of the Addington ministry was inconsistent and feeble, and his subsequent administration a series of humiliating failures.

He was not long minister when he felt the necessity of reinforcement. Lord Grenville, to whom he again applied, would not detach himself from Mr. Fox. Fearing to meet the approaching session unaided, he was reduced to the humiliating necessity of resorting to Mr. Addington; and their reconciliation was proclaimed early in December, 1804. The public heard this with incredulous surprise, but the fact was soon placed beyond doubt. Their reconciliation was insisted on by the king, and the parties shook hands in the royal presence. Early in January, 1805, Mr. Addington was created viscount Sidmouth, and appointed president of the council in the room of the duke of Portland, obliged by the infirmity of his health and years to retire.

The prince of Wales did not observe the same political neutrality during the ministry of Mr. Pitt as during that of his predecessor. He attended a meeting of opposition at the house of lord Moira previous to the opening of the session in January,

represented as still favourable to emancipation did not alone suffice. It even appears, from a letter of Mr. Fox first published in Moore's Life of Sheridan, that the prince of Wales, through Sheridan, directly requested Mr. Fox not to present the catholic petition. His request came too late — "Improbum consilium serum, ut debuit, venit." But had it come sooner it would have been unavailing. Mr. Fox's kind and yielding disposition was sometimes abused by inferior and intriguing spirits; but on a great occasion he was inexorable. "Now, therefore," says he, in his reply to Sheridan, "any discussion on this part of the subject would be too late; but I will fairly own, that if it were not, I could not be dissuaded from doing the public act, which of all others it will give me the greatest satisfaction and pride to perform. No past event in my political life ever did, and no future one ever can, give me such pleasure." This feeling was expressed at the opening, and pervaded the whole of his speech on moving the consideration of the catholic claims. He seemed, in that admirable speech, to rejoice as he rose above the mere strife of party into a region of enlarged principles and generous humanity.

Sheridan's devotion to the prince of Wales was sincere and disinterested, but servile and self-debasing. For it, he compromised that reputation for public integrity which, with his genius, palliated the vices of his private life. His hollow finesse on this occasion received a happy rebuke. He happened to dine at the house of a distinguished English catholic*, in company with the late Mr. Scully, who had come

* Mr. C. Butler.

over from Ireland as a member of the catholic deputation. The conversation naturally turned upon the approaching debate. "If," said Sheridan, "Moira and I, from particular circumstances, should not take as active a part on the catholic petition as you could wish, you may still be assured, Mr. Scully, that our hearts are with you."—"And if," replied the latter, "the French should invade Ireland, and the Irish catholics, from particular circumstances, should not take as active a part as you could wish, you may still be assured, Mr. Sheridan, that our hearts are with you."

The prince of Wales, with the foregoing exception, acted in perfect concert with the opposition to Mr. Pitt, — occasionally attending in the house of peers, and taking his seat between lords Moira and Grenville. He, however, spoke but once, and then only a few words on behalf of the duke of Clarence, who was absent.

The duke of Clarence was endowed with the faculty of eloquence, not only beyond his brothers, but in a degree which, with due exercise, would have placed him in the first rank of debaters in the house of lords. His name appears more frequently than those of the other princes in the parliamentary debates. He defended lord St. Vincent with the zeal of a friend; and asked on one occasion, in February, 1805, whether or not the conduct of that nobleman was to become the subject of a formal enquiry? After evasive answers from lords Sidmouth and Hawkesbury, the chancellor (lord Eldon) left the woolsack to rebuke the duke of Clarence for putting "questions inconsistent with order." The

duke, in reply to what he described as "the conscientious admonition of the noble and learned lord," maintained the regularity of his questions, though they might, not, he admitted, "be quite agreeable to his lordship and the ministers." Some few other sharp and civil encounters took place between the prince and the chancellor. In one instance the former aptly reminded the latter of the irregular frequency with which he left the woolsack to address the house upon the same question. The chancellor made no reply at the moment, but referred on a subsequent night to the expressions of the duke of Clarence. Upon this the prince of Wales, in explanation, disclaimed, on the part of the duke, all personal offence, and declared that "he understood his noble relation as merely illustrating the necessity of a liberal and indulgent construction of the orders of the house." The observations of the prince of Wales are given at length in the parliamentary debates, and were made with a facility and propriety which produced expressions of regret that he addressed the house so rarely.

Mr. Pitt had exposed the incapacity of lord Sidmouth with sarcasm and contempt; lord Sidmouth had turned somewhat ungratefully on his hereditary patron*; and their reconciliation, or rather their continuance as colleagues, endured only a few months. It soon appeared that the new president of the council had more influence in the royal closet than the prime minister, and especially used it in the disposal of church patronage.

* The father of lord Sidmouth was the physician and friend of lord Chatham.

Mr. Whitbread began his accusation of lord Melville early in this session. Lord Sidmouth proposed in the cabinet to abandon his colleague, was outvoted, opposed Mr. Pitt in parliament on the mode of procedure, resigned his office, and withdrew his support.

The aspect of affairs abroad was still more embarrassing to Mr. Pitt. Bonaparte had, in 1804, laid aside the titles of consul of France and president of the Cisalpine republic, for those of Napoleon emperor of the French and king of Italy; and in 1805 commenced the subjugation of Europe.

England, it is true, not only maintained but advanced her naval supremacy, and, with one exception, her naval glory. The exception was the unhappy "Catamaran project." A vast flotilla was collected in 1804 at Boulogne from the other parts of France in spite of every effort of the British cruizers. To attack it was hopeless after the failure of lord Nelson. An adventurer had the impudence and dexterity to impose upon lord Melville and Mr. Pitt an old and condemned American invention for destroying vessels by fire machines. The "Catamaran" was a long and narrow boat or chest, charged with combustibles which should explode by means of the combined machinery of a clock and gun-lock, at exactly calculated times; and which two men, riding upon a raft up to their waists in water, should tow and fasten to the enemy's ships, unperceived in the darkness of night. These engines of death, to which the French gave the odious name of "Infernal Machines," had been long in preparation, and created the most extravagant hopes. The execution was

confided to lord Keith, who commanded in the Downs; but it was rumoured that lord Melville himself would direct the enterprise in person, on board the admiral's ship; and it was known that Mr. Pitt went down to Walmer Castle for the purpose of beholding, across the Channel, the blowing up of the flotilla, with the most terrific of all conflagrations since the beginning of the world.

The project was equally hateful and ridiculous. No effect whatever appears to have been produced by the Catamarans; and twelve fire ships exploded without any serious mischief, from the success with which the enemy's vessels manœuvred to avoid them. The fire-ships were cutters or brigs, differing from the ordinary kind only in their giving no indication of what they were before their near approach. The first which bore down with full sails was never suspected by the French to be a death-ship without a soul on board, until they perceived it advancing under a tremendous fire, without returning a single shot.

This unhappy attack was continued from nine at night till four in the morning, and twelve fire-ships exploded in succession;—but, after the first surprise, they became objects of curiosity rather than fear. Lord Keith's official account is brief and general; and however dexterously worded, in order, doubtless, to avoid offence to the lords of the Admiralty, respecting an enterprise which was theirs exclusively, leaves little doubt of his disgust.

The result covered the government with ridicule at home; and the attempt, coupled by Napoleon with the disreputable zeal of two British envoys at

Munich and Stuttgard, was exhibited before the tribunal of Europe as evidence to convict the English ministry of a vile concert with the assassins of the infernal machine. Marshal Soult, who commanded at Boulogne, calls it "a horrible and dastardly project." "Cannon to cannon, bayonet to bayonet, such," says he, "is the law of war; but the nation which employs for its defence only plots, poniards, and fire-ships, is already degraded." This is rhodomontade, but it had its effect, not alone in France, but in other countries; and it must be admitted that the use of such means is scarcely conformable to the laws of civilised warfare. Science is applicable to the art of war as to every other; but, in its legitimate application, the result is to narrow, not widen, the sphere of mutual destruction.

On the morning after this discreditable enterprise, the French line of anchorage appeared as regular and complete as the preceding day; and Napoléon soon after came to Boulogne, for the purpose of ascertaining by experiment the facility and space of time which should be assumed for the embarkation of "the Army of England." The operation was performed in his presence with complete success; and the troops on board rent the air with their acclamations and eagerness to reach the shores of Britain.

Napoleon, beholding this spectacle, so magnificent and inspiring, appeared thoughtful and depressed. He, and probably he alone, of the many hundred thousands present, knew that all this vast preparation and courageous enthusiasm was for the present vain. He was aware that a new coalition

of Austria and Russia, formed by Mr. Pitt, would soon demand the undivided exertion of his resources and genius.

One of the most brilliant achievements in the annals of naval war soon rendered his prospects of invasion still more distant, if not altogether hopeless.

The commencement of hostilities with Spain, at the close of 1804, extended the circle of maritime war and victory to the British navy. The French admiral, Villeneuve, commanding the combined French and Spanish fleets, early in 1805, was pursued by lord Nelson, commanding a squadron of only half the enemy's force, from the Mediterranean to the West Indies. Villeneuve fled—somewhat unaccountably for a man of moderate talent, but undoubted courage—over the Atlantic, back to Europe; fell in with the British squadron, commanded by sir R. Calder, off Cape Finisterre; and after an engagement in which he lost two ships, made his way unmolested to Cadiz. Both admirals were blamed by their respective governments and nations for not renewing the fight.

On the 19th of October admiral Villeneuve came out of Cadiz with the combined French and Spanish fleets, and on the 21st was defeated by Nelson in the great battle of Trafalgar. This victory cost England the life of her greatest admiral, but utterly ruined the maritime power of France and Spain. Nelson's order of battle is regarded by the naval writers and other competent authorities of France as a chef d'œuvre. His general instruction to the captains of the fleet ten days before demonstrated, they say, by anticipation, the defeat of

the French.* The news of this irreparable disaster reached Napoleon in Austria, in the midst of his triumphs, and threw him into an access of ungovernable rage. "I'll teach," said he, "the French admirals to conquer, by repeating the lesson of England and admiral Byng." Villeneuve, who became a prisoner, was exchanged after some time, and destroyed himself at an inn on his way to Paris; or, according to report, was assassinated by order of the minister of marine, Decres, who had reason to dread his presence and recrimination.

The victory of Trafalgar, momentous as it was, only destroyed the weaker arm of France. It was not a counterpoise to the triumph of Napoleon over Mr. Pitt's third and last coalition. He left Paris on the 24th of September (1805,) to join his army; took Ulm on the 17th of October, with its artillery, magazines, garrison of 30,000 men and worthless commander, Mack; entered the capital of Austria, without resistance, on the 15th of November; pursued the fugitive court of Vienna, and the allied armies of Austria and Russia into Moravia; and on the 2d of December obtained the decisive and dreadful victory of Austerlitz, which put an end to the campaign and the coalition, and made Napoleon the dictator of continental Europe.

These were trying and terrible disappointments to the British minister. His situation at home was equally productive of vexation and distress. The incapacity of his cabinet threw upon him the main direction of the government in its several branches. He had lost character by his reconciliation with lord Sidmouth, and was weakened in parliament by

* Victoires, conquêtes, revers, et désastres des Français, &c.

that minister's desertion. The magic of his eloquence and authority no longer ruled the divisions of the house of commons. He discovered this by the most painful proof,—his inability to protect his only able colleague, and most faithful friend, lord Melville. In the royal closet his ascendant was no longer the same. Here he encountered, not merely insubordination, but petty-minded mortifying remarks on his failures. His spirit, arrogant, and ungenerous in his day of power, was proportionally depressed in his adverse fortune. It was remarked that he drooped from the moment when intelligence reached him of the disgraceful capitulation of Ulm. When news arrived of the battle of Austerlitz, he was taking the waters at Bath. Parliament met on the 21st of January, 1806. Amendments to the address were read (but not moved) in the house of peers by lord Cowper; in the house of commons by lord Henry Petty (marquis of Lansdowne), in the absence of the minister. His friends proclaimed that his health was nearly restored. Only three days after, he expired at his country house, near London, of political failures and disappointed hopes, in which the safety and honour of his country had assuredly their share. Mr. Pitt merits the praise of patriotism as a man, and talents as a minister; but, if he might claim the gratitude, he had at least equal reason to entreat the forgiveness of his country at his last hour. The elements were contrasted in him, like that allegorical statue of Persepolis, which the beholder was alternately disposed to admire and to destroy.*

* Tales of Voltaire.

The death of Mr. Pitt rendered a change of ministry unavoidable. Lord Hawkesbury was offered the premiership by the king — declined it after two days' deliberation, — and grasped the sinecure of the cinque ports with flagrant and scandalising rapacity in his retreat. The formation of a ministry was next proposed to lord Sidmouth, and declined by him. Reduced to extremity, the king silenced without sacrificing his personal antipathies, and negotiated with the united parties of lord Grenville and Mr. Fox. This led to the prince of Wales's taking once more a share in public affairs, and the great game of political party.

A reconciliation, so called, had taken place some time before between the king and the prince. The first interview was proclaimed in the following court bulletin, which appeared in the public prints, and is preserved in the Annual Register:—"This day (12th November, 1804,) the long expected interview between the sovereign and heir apparent took place at one o'clock, at Kew Palace. The queen and princesses were present. The meeting of those two personages, after so long an interval, was marked by every emotion of kindness and conciliation on the one part, and of affectionate respect on the other. The scene is said to have been affecting beyond all description; and we are fully persuaded that the circumstance will afford the highest gratification to his majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects." Next day the king wrote to the princess of Wales a letter, which relates so particularly to this interview, that, though now hackneyed in print, it cannot well be dispensed with.

" Windsor Castle, Nov. 13. 1804.

" My dearest Daughter-in-law and Niece.

" Yesterday I and the rest of my family had an interview with the prince of Wales at Kew. Care was taken on all sides to avoid all subjects of altercation or explanation, consequently the conversation was neither instructive nor entertaining; but it leaves the prince of Wales in a situation to show whether his desire to return to his family is only verbal or real; which time alone can show. I am not idle in my endeavours to make enquiries that may enable me to communicate some plan for the advantage of the dear child, you and me, with so much reason, must interest ourselves about; and its effecting my having the happiness of living more with you is no small incentive to my forming some ideas on the subject; but you may depend on their being not decided upon without your thorough and cordial concurrence; for your authority as mother it is my object to support.

" Believe me, at all times,

" My dearest Daughter-in-law and Niece,

" Your most affectionate Father-in-law and Uncle,

" G. R."

It was known at the time, and may be inferred even from the king's very characteristic letter, that the prince's interview with his father had objects and results different from reconciliation. That vile tissue of female malice and gossiping defamation, which ended in " the Douglass conspiracy," had already been commenced; and the prince of Wales resolved to withdraw his infant daughter from her mother, for the purpose of taking her under his own imme-

diate guardianship. The king denied peremptorily the right of the prince to the care of his daughter. Lord Moira was summoned from his military command in Scotland to negotiate in the matter; and the prince himself went to Bath for the purpose of consulting personally with lord Thurlow. There is reason to believe that lord Thurlow declared "the prince, as heir apparent and father, had a right to the guardianship of his child against all the world." The king, however, asserted his superior title, took the young princess under his guardianship, and thus prevented her separation from her mother. He at the same time studiously visited and countenanced the princess of Wales. The prince by no means acquiesced in the king's claim, and it was supposed the question could be settled only by legal adjudication, when, after much discussion, an arrangement or compromise was accomplished by lord Moira and the chancellor. The guardianship of the princess was surrendered to the king, who, in his turn, abandoned the intention of allotting apartments in Windsor Castle to the princess of Wales.

Mr. Pitt, the day before he died, wrote two letters on public affairs; the one to lord Grenville, referring to their political and private friendship, and their recent differences of public views — the other to the king, recommending to him the appointment of lord Grenville as prime minister. It is obvious, however, from the offer made to lords Hawkesbury and Sidmouth, that the impossibility of re-constructing a new cabinet from the wreck of the old, and not the dying advice of Mr. Pitt, determined the king. The negotiations which led to the form-

tion of the new cabinet were conducted in bad faith, and based in court intrigue.

Lord Grenville, having passed the morning of the 27th of January in consultation with Mr. Fox, waited by appointment on the king. His audience was short but satisfactory. He began by frankly declaring, that he thought no ministry could be advantageously formed upon an exclusive principle. The king assented with surprising readiness, and asked him whom he intended to consult and include. Lord Grenville replied, that the very first person with whom he proposed to consult was Mr. Fox. "I expected and meant it so," was the king's reply. The king then desired that "Lord Grenville, in conjunction with Mr. Fox, would immediately form an administration, which," he said, "he had no doubt would prove perfectly satisfactory to him." It was said that he desired at the same time that the prince of Wales should be consulted in the arrangements. The prince, whether in pursuance of this intimation or not, was consulted in point of fact, and the consequence was, the introduction of lord Sidmouth. Sheridan has received, from his distinguished biographer, credit for having quartered the Addingtons upon Mr. Fox. It seems more likely that he acted or intrigued in the matter, not from any interests or partialities of his own, but from his disastrous eagerness to minister to the wishes of the prince. Sheridan had so little kindness for lord Sidmouth, that it was he who, under the mask of friendship, in malicious sport, fixed upon that minister the nickname of "the Doctor."

Lord Grenville submitted to the king, on the 31st

of January, a complete list of the proposed administration. The king received it graciously, and took two days, according to established usage, for deliberation. After the appointed time had elapsed, lord Grenville presented himself again, and encountered unexpected difficulties. The king wished not only that the duke of York should be commander-in-chief immovably, but wholly beyond the control of the government. It was supposed the negotiation must break off, but eventually an understanding was come to, and the new ministry was accepted by the king on the 3d of February. It proved, or was pretended, to be the fact, that the king's objection to lord Grenville's views respecting the command-in-chief of the army was merely verbal. Lord Grenville submitted to him a slight change of expression, concerted with Mr. Fox, lord Spencer, and other destined ministers; and the king said, in a tone most suspiciously gracious, — "My lord Grenville, I am perfectly satisfied — I accept the ministry." It was composed as follows: — Lord Grenville, premier; Mr. Fox, secretary for foreign affairs; lord Henry Petty, chancellor of the exchequer; lord Erskine, chancellor; lord Spencer, home department; lord Fitzwilliam, president of the council; lord Sidmouth, privy seal; lord Howick (Grey), admiralty; lord Moira, ordnance; lord Ellenborough, chief justice (with a seat in the cabinet); Mr. Windham, secretary at war; Mr. Sheridan, treasurer of the navy; duke of Bedford, lord lieutenant of Ireland. There was a friendly contention between lords Ellenborough and Erskine, — each claiming the chief justiceship, and yielding to the other the higher honours of the

chancellorship. Lord Erskine's personal vanity would have preferred the seals, precarious as they were; but, with the consciousness that he was ignorant both of the principles and practice of equity, he trembled for his fame, and affected the modesty of concession. Lord Ellenborough, with his characteristic frankness, cut the matter short, by saying, "Why, Erskine, I know as little of equity as you do yourself." Frequent and recent instances prove that a mere common lawyer may be suddenly transformed into an equity judge; but at the same time it follows as a corollary, that the learned profession has its share of charlatanry, when, with the notorious want of previous study and experience in that branch of jurisprudence, these sudden translations can be made with safety and advantage.*

This was the most sweeping ministerial change that had been witnessed for several years. The public — at least that part which thinks — was astonished and perplexed, by the generous facility with which the king laid aside his personal antipathies. A key to the enigma was subsequently found. The duke of Cumberland, and lords Eldon and Hawkesbury, communicated several times, during the ministerial negotiations, with the king, and a mine was prepared under the feet of the future ministers. No administration could be formed capable of resisting the Fox and Grenville parties in oppo-

* The following notice of a minor appointment appeared in the papers of the day: — "Henry Brougham, esq. is appointed envoy to the court of Lisbon. He is esteemed a young man of considerable abilities, and author of a work, entitled 'An Enquiry into the Colonial Policy of the European Powers.'"

sition. It was, therefore, concerted, in the secret cabinet, that those parties should be accepted as ministers, placed in such situations that they must necessarily disappoint the public, and dismissed when they should have become unpopular and disabled.

Mr. Fox was blamed for his junction with lord Sidmouth; but the ministry, though strong in talent and public opinion, had not a due proportion of votes in parliament, and lord Sidmouth brought with him a compact party in his train. The only real inconvenience which resulted from the alliance with him was its entailing on the ministry the discussions which took place upon the admission of his friend lord Ellenborough, at his request, to a seat in the cabinet.

It is a curiously illustrative fact that lord Sidmouth, who was not in the secret, forfeited his majesty's favour by strengthening his majesty's government! The only difference of opinion with him in the cabinet was on catholic emancipation, but that question was for the present hopeless; and the catholics themselves had resolved not to embarrass their friends by fruitlessly pressing it.

Mr. Fox's coalition with lord Grenville has also been censured—but most unreasonably. The nation with one voice demanded, in 1804, a ministry comprising Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, and Lord Grenville; and the public wish was now realised in principle and degree, and with much less inconsistency. There was no longer any leading difference of policy between lord Grenville and Mr. Fox. The French republic had vanished; they were agreed upon the

value of peace in the abstract; and they were in complete unison upon the greatest question of domestic policy agitated in parliament for several years — the catholic claims.

The attention of the prince of Wales was soon diverted from politics by the fatality which seemed to attend his marriage. The revolting circumstances of the investigation which took place this year (1806) into the conduct of the princess of Wales demand very slight notice in these pages. They have already obtained a notoriety which dispenses from any more particular mention of them. It will be sufficient to state that sir John and lady Douglass lived in the neighbourhood and intimacy of the princess, at Blackheath; that lady Douglass had some grovelling enmities with the princess, charged her with avowed pregnancy, and the birth of an illegitimate child; and that a numerous array of other witnesses, chiefly male and female domestics, deposed to suspicious familiarities between the princess and several persons named. It appears from the published proceedings that "the Douglass conspiracy," as it was termed, commenced in 1804. The princess herself states that for more than two years previous to the enquiry, in 1806, she was "beset by spies."* But it is highly probable and presumable from the investigation, that the prince of Wales was ignorant of the charges preferred by sir John and lady Douglass against the life and honour of the princess, until they were formally presented in writing by sir J. Douglass to the duke of Sussex. If, therefore, the princess was "beset by

* Letter to the king.

spies," acting in concert with the Douglasses in 1804, this must have taken place through the officious baseness of some eager parasites without the knowledge of the prince.

The princess complained of the secret tribunal, and of the secret judgment, substantially acquitting her, but suggesting a more vigilant observance of discretion and dignity, which it pronounced. But it was not possible that justice and decency could have been better consulted than by submitting the whole matter to the capacity and conscience of four cabinet ministers *, men of the highest rank and honour in the kingdom; and even supposing the tribunal objectionable, it was not chosen by the prince. Thus far, therefore, without giving the least countenance to the charges against the princess, it may be affirmed that the prince's conduct was blameless. His culpability began when, dissatisfied with the judgment of the commissioners, he endeavoured to take further proceedings. His object, however, may have been, not so much the gratification of his vengeance as his release from a yoke imposed on him under circumstances of flagrant hardship, and which galled him from the first hour.

Mr. Fox, the leading objects of whose public life and policy were liberty and peace, took the foreign department, as affording direct facilities for carrying his pacific views into effect. Before he was yet ten days in office, an alien, calling himself Guillet de la Gevrilliere, arrived at Gravesend without a passport, and wrote to Mr. Fox that he had an important

* Lords Erskine (chancellor), Spencer, Grenville, and Ellenborough.

communication to make to him. Mr. Fox immediately sent him a passport, admitted him to a private interview, and repelled indignantly his disclosure, true or false, of a plot to assassinate Napoleon. The next step taken by Mr. Fox was one which all applauded, but which no one could be surprised at. He immediately made the French government acquainted with the circumstances, and had the miscreant detained in custody until his designs, if he entertained them, should be guarded against.* Talleyrand acknowledged the communication with a just and happy tribute to the character of Mr. Fox, and enclosed at the same time an extract from the speech of the French emperor to the legislative body expressing his desire of peace. This was equivalent to a direct overture from the French government, and acted upon as such by Mr. Fox.

The state of Europe, at the death of Mr. Pitt, rendered the negotiation of a safe and honourable peace most difficult. His last ministry had raised barriers against Napoleon only to be broken down, and to afford a pretext for further invasions of the independence of Europe. The battle of Austerlitz was fought on the second, and the peace of Presburgh signed on the 26th, of December. The emperor Alexander declined being a party to

* Some of the English journals pronounced him an agent of the French police, sent over by Napoleon to create a pretext for the overture made by Talleyrand. The supposition scarcely deserves mention, and still less refutation. He was either an assassin, or an *intrigant* on his own account, but more probably the former.

this treaty, but retreated with his dispirited troops within the frozen wastes of Russia. It appeared to seal the doom of the Austrian court and German empire. Napoleon stripped the emperor Francis not only of his territories but titles. He reduced the emperor of Germany to the style and title of emperor of Austria, grasped the protectorate of the Germanic states, made kings of the electors of Bavaria and Wurtemberg, added Venice to the kingdom of Italy, placed the crown of Naples on the head of his brother Joseph, and already contemplated the degradation of the old and illustrious republic of Holland into a petty kingdom, with his brother Louis for its king. A safe and honourable peace, and Mr. Fox was incapable of concluding any other, was difficult of attainment, with one whose views of aggrandisement went beyond even the inordinate power which he actually possessed.

Mr. Fox soon confirmed the public confidence in his negotiations by the decision with which he rejected the peace of Amiens as a basis, and insisted upon the admission of the emperor of Russia as a party. "My wish," said he, in the house of commons, "the first wish of my heart, is peace; but such a peace as shall preserve our connections and influence on the continent, as shall not abate one jot of the national honour, and such only." This declaration was received with tumultuous cheers by the whole house, and a murmur of approbation by the strangers in the gallery.

England and France negotiated for the first time since the revolution in a tone of mutual conciliation and courtesy. Mr. Fox's hopes were not sanguine.

His blended firmness and mildness, however, did much, and might do more, if his health had not given way before he was yet four months minister. The late hours and fatigue to which he was subjected as leader in the house of commons may be said to have proved fatal to him. A deadly system of worrying and vexatious debate was organised against him in that house. Lord Castlereagh rose to debate "the principle" of the clause for limited service in the mutiny bill, after the principle had been already under discussion for eleven hours; and between frivolous divisions and speaking against time, the house was kept sitting from four till seven in the morning. The ministers were released even then only by a sort of capitulation. Sheridan, when this system became apparent, proposed that the ministerial members distributed into parties of twenty should go home to rest, and come back to relieve guard after they had slept and breakfasted.

Notwithstanding the severe illness of Mr. Fox he continued to direct the negotiations and dictate the despatches from his couch, until the progress of his disease rendered all application to business not only dangerous but impossible. On the 13th of September, 1806, this illustrious patriot and statesman, after only a few months, followed his great rival to the tomb. Characters of him have been drawn by master-hands; but who thinks of referring to those memorials? The image of his character and life, public and private, is fresh in the minds of men, — even of the generation which succeeds and knows him only from tradition or reading. Frank and simple, he knew no theatric artifice, no politic

concealment, no factitious diversity of personage between the statesman and the man. The errors which prove the weakness of humanity were in him as undisguised as the endowments which ennoble it. Without those weaknesses and errors, his character would have been nearer perfection, but not more grand, — and his generous sympathies might have been less active and redundant. His last effort as a minister was to procure peace: his last act to propose the abolition of the slave trade.

The prince of Wales visited Mr. Fox constantly in his illness, regretted his death, and, if the commands of the king under the pretence of court etiquette had not forbidden him, would have attended his remains to the tomb. The funeral procession of Mr. Fox might — his memory could not — derive lustre from the presence of princes or kings; but the memory of George IV. would have derived a redeeming and touching trait from the presence of the prince of Wales at the funeral of his illustrious friend.

The conduct of the negotiations with Napoleon was committed in its earlier stages to lord Yarmouth, then detained a prisoner in France. Lord Lauderdale was afterwards sent by Mr. Fox, as envoy extraordinary, to negotiate in concert with lord Yarmouth. The hopes of peace, faint from the beginning, vanished as soon as Mr. Fox died. Lord Lauderdale demanded his passport on the 6th of October.

Napoleon had left Paris a few days before, to place himself at the head of what he called, with good reason, "The Grand Army." A fourth coalition had been organised, or rather subsidised, against him by

England. Were the coalition organised by the British government, and under its control, the whig ministers of that day might with some show of justice be held responsible for the event. It is natural that odium should be cast disingenuously upon a cabinet by competitors and opponents; but there is something strange in the mistaken impartiality and false candour with which Mr. Fox and his colleagues have since been abandoned by some friendly historians. It is due to truth to state, in passing, the simple fact. The issue of Mr. Pitt's last coalition, in 1805, had placed Austria *hors de combat.* The emperor Alexander refused to ratify the preliminary treaty, negotiated by his envoy at Paris, in the summer of 1806; but he failed to come with sufficient expedition and energy into the field. In the mean time the weak, wavering, and unprincipled king of Prussia was distracted between the temptation of a British subsidy on the one side, and the necessity of disgorging Hanover, which he had so scandalously seized, on the other. Time, so precious in war, was lost; lord Morpeth, who went on a special mission to the Prussian head quarters, encountered so much indecision and evasion that he could hardly conceal his indignation and disgust.

The first hostile movement of the Prussian army was made on the 12th of September. A French *corps d'armée,* under Bernadotte, put itself in motion on the 18th: Napoleon left St. Cloud on the 25th; crossed the Rhine on the 1st of October, and proclaimed to France and Europe the renewal of war. The king of Prussia, without experience, capacity, or force of character, placed himself implicitly in the

hands of his queen and a council of generals. The old duke of Brunswick, who retained the presumption of youth, but had lost its vigour, and whose reputation had unaccountably survived his memorable march to Paris, was placed at the head of the Prussian army, with the pompous title of Generalissimo. The queen of Prussia accompanied her husband to the head-quarters of the army. An enthusiastic, but over-weening spirit animated the young officers and the military council; and an ultimatum, as extravagant under the circumstances as the manifesto of the duke of Brunswick in 1792, was despatched to Talleyrand: — "I pity," said Napoleon, "the king of Prussia: he assuredly cannot have seen this rhapsody, which they send me in his name." Then turning round to Berthier, he continued: "Marshal, we are challenged to an affair of honour; as it appears there is a fair lady (the queen of Prussia) in the case, let us be gallant, and march for Saxony night and day."

The "rendezvous" took place on the 14th of October, when the battle of Jena, or rather the battles of Jena and Averstadt, fought simultaneously, proved more disastrous to the Prussians than that of Austerlitz the preceding year had proved to the Austrians. The remains of the Prussian army fled before the French in the direction of Magdeburgh. Frederick-William and his queen sought refuge in Konigsburgh. The duke of Brunswick, wounded with grape shot, made a humiliating appeal to Napoleon, was reminded of his famous manifesto and recent boastings in reply, and died of disappointment and his wound at Altona.

Napoleon entered Potsdam on the 25th, despoiled Sans Souci of the sword and riband of Frederick the Great, and the colours taken in the seven years' war, and sent them as trophies to the Hotel of the Invalids at Paris. On the 27th he made his triumphal entry into Berlin. The civic authorities and a host of courtiers presented, or rather prostrated, themselves before him. He treated some of the latter with bitter scorn and contemptuous taunts. The court ladies of Berlin, taking their tone from the queen, had been eager for war. "Why do you not," said the insulting conqueror to the Prussian courtiers, "keep your wives and daughters in better order?" To others he said, "I will reduce these court nobles so low that they shall be forced to beg their bread." The prince de Hatzfeld had rendered himself particularly obnoxious, and was ordered to retire to his country seat. After a few days it was discovered, from his intercepted correspondence, that he was acting as a spy, and he was ordered to appear before a council of war: his wife, in an advanced state of pregnancy, presented herself before Napoleon, and protested vehemently that her husband was innocent. "You know," said he, "your husband's hand-writing; read this letter." She read the evidence of his guilt, and was in despair. "Well, you have now the evidence of his crime in your hands — it is the only evidence, and there is a fire in the room." She threw the letter into the fire, and her husband received both his life and liberty.

Napoleon granted an armistice on terms the most humiliating to the Prussian generals; and whilst awaiting the ratification of it by the king of Prussia,

issued the famous Berlin decree, declaring the British isles in a state of blockade.

A brilliant episode in the history of the revolutionary war signalised the valour and steadiness of the British troops in the summer of this year. The court of Naples had fled under British protection to Sicily. Sir John Stuart, who commanded in that island, was induced by the importunities of the king and queen of Naples, to favour the spirit of insurrection against the French, by a descent on the coast of Calabria: he sailed from Messina on the 1st of July, with about 5000 men, and landed near the village of Santa Eufemia. General Reynier, who commanded the French troops in the Abruzzi, advanced to meet him; and both armies were confronted on the 3d on the plains of Maida. The French occupied an advantageous position on a declivity; but Reynier descended confidently into the plain, and crossed the river Amato to meet the British. A vigorous cannonade and fire of musketry did great execution upon him in his advance. As if by mutual agreement, the firing ceased, and both sides approached in compact order, until their bayonets crossed; when the French, surprised by the steadiness of their opponents, broke and fled. The confusion and carnage for the small numbers engaged was unprecedented.

This battle is really memorable. It is among the very few instances in which troops have so closely engaged as to cross their bayonets in a charge: one side usually retreats before that trying moment. The secondary part played by the English in the seven years' war, and the unhappy campaigns of the

duke of York had lowered the reputation of British troops. The campaign of Egypt was the first vindication of their real character; this engagement, though on a small scale, was the second; and both gave examples and impulses which were not without their effect in the subsequent campaigns and victories of the Peninsula. Each party exaggerated the force of the other as compared with its own; but the advantage of numbers on either side must have been trifling. It is to be regretted that Sir John Stuart's despatch is very different in taste and style from the models which had been furnished to him by lord Hutchinson in Egypt. Disgusted with the atrocities committed by the Calabrese insurgents, who were for the most part banditti, intent only upon robbery and murder, and seeing that nothing was to be effected, the British commander re-embarked, and returned to Messina.

The dissolution of the ministry was expected on the death of Mr. Fox. Secret audiences and intrigues were in full activity during his illness. But the fidelity of lord Grenville to the surviving friends and party of Mr. Fox prevented an immediate change. A partial movement took place, in consequence of which lord Howick succeeded Mr. Fox, and lord Holland was introduced for the first time into the cabinet. The ministry, even before Mr. Fox died, had lost much of its strength. It is difficult for a popular opposition to come into power without disappointing the people. Their strength in parliament was, at the same time, undermined secretly in the king's name. The opposition, led by lords Hawkesbury, Castlereagh, and Eldon,

broadly and truly declared that, though not in office for the present, they were the real friends of the king. It is easy to conceive the effect upon straggling votes and parliamentary adventurers.

The ministry, to strengthen the defence of the country, and do something liberal and characteristic of the party, brought in a bill, early in 1807, opening the military and naval services to all his majesty's subjects on taking a certain oath, without distinction of religion. Though this bill included protestant dissenters, the catholics, especially of Ireland, were its chief objects. The measure was submitted to the king, approved by him, and on the motion of lord Howick read a first time on the 5th of March. Lord Howick postponed the second reading from the day originally ordered. It proved that the king's opinion had in the mean time been changed, and that he withdrew his approbation. The ministers, or lord Grenville in their name, expressed to him their readiness to withdraw it. The king required that they should not only withdraw the bill, but pledge themselves by a minute of council never to reproduce this measure, or any other relating to the catholics. Such a pledge from responsible ministers would be a high misdemeanour. The king, and those who suggested it to him, well knew it would not be given; and the ministers, it was presumed, must resign. They not only refused any pledge restrictive of their free agency, but recorded their refusal by a minute of council, in substance as follows: — "That they trusted his majesty would see the indispensable necessity of their expressing, on withdrawing the

bill, the strong persuasion they felt of the benefits which would result from a different course of policy to the catholics of Ireland; that it was indispensable to their characters that they should openly avow these sentiments, not only on the present occasion, but in the event of the catholic petition coming forward; and they further insisted, that the present deference to his majesty might not be understood as restraining them from submitting for his majesty's decision, from time to time, such measures as circumstances might require respecting the state of Ireland." In order to assert more completely the principle upon which they acted, they came to a resolution, that their retirement should not be voluntary; and reduced the king to the necessity of dismissing them. The king's mind was said to have been enlightened, and the pledge suggested to him by lords Hawkesbury and Eldon, either directly or through the duke of Cumberland and two prelates, who were stated to have had a joint audience of the king immediately before his marked disapprobation was conveyed to lord Grenville.

Lords Hawkesbury and Eldon were sent for, and the following administration announced after a few days: — The duke of Portland, premier; Mr. Perceval, chancellor of the exchequer; lord Eldon, chancellor; Mr. Canning, secretary of state for foreign affairs; lord Hawkesbury, secretary of state for the home department; lord Castlereagh, secretary of state for the department of war and colonies; lord Camden, president of the council; lord Westmoreland, privy seal; lord Mulgrave, first lord of the admiralty; lord Chatham, master general of the

ordnance; the duke of Richmond, lord lieutenant of Ireland. It was somewhat curious, and may be worth mentioning, that after Lord Grenville had consummated the abolition of the slave trade, which Mr. Fox with his last breath had begun, Mr. Wilberforce was among the first to bite his heel as he went out of office.

The king, doubtless, had too good an understanding with his new ministers to demand of them the same express pledge which had caused the removal of their predecessors. It might, however, be constitutionally implied from the circumstances under which they came into office that they had so bound themselves; and accordingly Mr. Brand proposed, and Mr. Lambe seconded, the following important resolution in the house of commons, on the 9th of April, 1807: — "That it is contrary to the first duties of the confidential servants of the crown to restrain themselves by any pledge, express or implied, from offering to the king any advice which the course of circumstances might render necessary for the welfare and security of any part of his majesty's extensive empire." This is a truism, if the constitution be not a mockery; yet was it directly negatived in the house of commons, by a majority of 258 to 226. A similar resolution was moved by the marquis of Stafford, in the house of lords, where it was negatived by a majority of 171 to 90.

This question, the first and grand trial of strength, was debated with great ardour and ability in both houses. It is singular that the opposition had such strong minorities. Lord Sidmouth voted against his late colleagues, and the personal friends of the prince of Wales absented themselves.

'Lord Erskine, in the house of peers, spoke in a strain of distempered folly, which excites wonder, coming from one who had been chancellor and a cabinet minister. He mixed up the history of the military and naval service bill with that of his own religious education, and made his confession of faith in a tone of drivelling or canting egotism. "I am one," said he, "who really entertains the profoundest reverence for God, religion, and all professors of the Christian *protestant* faith. No man, my lords, can be more religious than I am. I need not except the worthy and pious prelates, in whose presence I speak. I glory in this declaration: would to God my life were as pure as my faith. I hope to see all nations collected under the benign shade of the Gospel. I regard the Romish religion as a gross superstition, now visibly on the decline, and so far from being indulgent to it, I wish that *inconvenience* should be felt, though *no injustice* suffered by its professors." It would be hard to say whether this distinction savours more of pettifogging or of persecution. Lord Erskine was one of the many men over-rated, as others are under-rated, in their day. He was a sort of shining ephemeron. His faculties never reached the views or the eloquence of political deliberation. Even his speeches at the bar, *preconised* as they have been, will not save him from oblivion. His rhetoric, as preserved in them, is so superficial, that his power must have consisted in the contagious fervour of delivery and temperament, with which he applied himself to juries, whose minds were of the same stature with his own.'

CHAP. XIII.

1807, 1808.

TORY MINISTRY. — ATTACK ON COPENHAGEN. — PENINSULAR WAR.

THE ascendant of toryism has been as favoured and complete during the long reign of George III. as during that of the most despotic of the Stuarts. From the accession of George III. to the death of Mr. Pitt, this may be accounted for by the king's principles and character, and by the presence of some leading talent at the head of the party. Lord North upheld toryism for ten, Mr. Pitt for twenty years; the one against Burke, Fox, and the disasters of the American war; the other against Fox, Grey, and the perils and failures of the war with France. But lord North, with his eloquence, accomplishments, and wit; Mr. Pitt, with his brilliant apostasy, his power in debate, and his administrative talents, were historic figures on a level with their destinations.

The men who now (March, 1807,) constituted the tory party and the government, — without political character or leading talent, — with only the old age and imbecility of the duke of Portland, the subaltern qualifications of Mr. Perceval, and the respectable mediocrity of lord Liverpool — yet quartered themselves upon the state for another fourth of

a century. They sustained themselves through the short remaining period of the personal reign of George III. in spite of a vigorous opposition and their disgraceful failures; they continued ministers under the regency, after having provoked the resentment of the prince of Wales in the most tender point, by taking part against him with his wife; of the regent, by loading him with what he called chains; and eventually they associated their administration with the most astonishing results and the proudest triumphs. This political phenomenon, with the course of public opinion and events, compromises, and cabals in its train, forms, even in a brief compass, one of the most important and curious subjects of historical narration.

The princess of Wales was by no means satisfied with the judgment of the secret tribunal under the whig ministry. She wrote to the king a letter, demanding her reception at court. He declined complying with her request for the present, on the ground that the prince of Wales had made a formal communication of his intention to lay all the evidence respecting her conduct before his law advisers. Upon this the princess addressed to the king two long letters, or rather elaborate pleadings in her case, drawn up, it was said, by Mr. Perceval, her chief counsel. In these she charged the commissioners with injustice, the prince with vindictive persecution; threatened the exposure of the whole evidence and proceedings, if she were not immediately and unequivocally reinstated at court; and, by the advice and agency of her law advisers and political friends, caused to be printed several thousand

copies of the so-called "delicate investigation," in all its scandalous details, which she kept ready to be launched at a moment's notice upon the world. Pending this correspondence the ministry was changed, and her advocates were now her judges. One of their first acts was to record their unqualified opinion of the propriety of her demeanour as well as innocence of her conduct, and to advise the restitution of all her court rights. She was accordingly received at the drawing-room, had apartments allotted to her in Kensington palace, and of course kept back the threatened and desperate publication of the noted "book."

With majorities of only thirty-two and forty-six on two trying party questions, the new ministers resorted to a dissolution. Parliament was dissolved on the 28th of April. The elections were keenly contested; the strife of party was envenomed by the religious question which had proved fatal to the last ministry. Each party had its watchword: the cries of "No popery!" "No aristocratic dictation of great families to the sovereign!" on the one side, were answered with the contemptuous appellations of "pettifogging bigots," and "court intriguers," on the other. The new parliament was opened on the 22d, and the king's speech delivered by commission on the 26th of June. The result of the elections in the first shock, on the address, was looked to with intense public interest. Lord Howick (Grey) had summoned the opposition by a circular letter, and they assembled on the 24th in Willis's great room, mustering 180 peers and commoners. The unusual number of 505 members of the house of commons

attended to hear the king's speech, and vote upon the amendment. It would appear as if both sides had a presentiment that the question was not the mere possession of power by the actual ministers, but the hereditary succession to it by a sort of party dynasty. Amendments to the ministerial address were moved by lord Fortescue in the house of peers, by lord Howick in the house of commons, and respectively negatived by majorities of 160 to 67, and 350 to 155. The new ministry maintained proportionate majorities through the remainder of the session, which terminated on the 14th of August.

Napoleon, in the mean time was advancing in the conquest of continental Europe with giant strides. In six weeks he had crushed the armies and occupied the kingdom of Prussia. Frederick William, whose weak character and unprincipled rapacity were now coupled with his fallen state, excited at once the pity and contempt of Europe. The terms of the armistice entered into by his generals were so humiliating that he refused to ratify them, and joined the wreck of his army to that of Russia. Napoleon's advanced guard was already entering Poland to attack the Russians; and the Poles—that generous, interesting, gallant, and ill-fated people—thinking they beheld in prospect the redemption of their national independence from atrocious partition and a foreign yoke, received the French with enthusiasm. "The love of country," says the French bulletin, "that national sentiment, has not only survived entire among the people of Poland, but has been steeped into a finer temper by adversity. Their first wish, their first passion, is to become a

nation." This was true: the Poles, in their state of slavery, never lost the sentiments of freemen; they might say of themselves with Alfieri—

"Servi siam si, ma servi ognor frementi."

The Russians abandoned Warsaw, and crossed the Vistula, to the astonishment of Napoleon. It appears * that the emperor Alexander, having to decide between two opposite plans of operation, submitted to him by his generals, adopted at first that which in 1812 added the fatal error and experience of Napoleon to those of Charles XII., Julian, and Crassus. The Russian general Beningsen was called another Fabius; and such was the sanguine credulity in England, that it was pretended he was no other than Moreau under an assumed name. Napoleon, on entering Posen, published, as an order of the day, an imperial decree which ordained the erection of a "temple of glory" at Paris in honour of the grand army, and an address to the troops, bearing the peculiar stamp of his martial eloquence, —of that rhetoric of the camp, in which, among warriors modern and ancient, he is unrivalled. The soldiers responded with enthusiasm, and crossed the Vistula, with Murat and Davoust at the head of the advanced guard.

The entreaties of the king of Prussia, and still more of the queen†, induced the emperor of Russia to abandon his system of Parthian warfare. Beningsen concentrated his troops at Pultusk, took up a strong position, resisted the attack of the French with courage, steadiness, and considerable loss;

* Victoires, Conquêtes, Revers, &c.

† Moniteur. Mem. Mil.

abandoned both his entrenched camp and the town of Pultusk in the night; retreated upon Ostrolenka, and had the effrontery to proclaim a victory to Europe. The French in this action were commanded by marshal Lannes. On the 8th (of February) the main body of the French army, commanded by Napoleon in person, overtook the Russians at Eylau. Both armies were drawn up in order of battle at the break of day; and, after a sustained and deadly fire of artillery, and dreadful carnage by cavalry and the bayonet, the Russians were put to the rout.

Napoleon, after a short repose in winter quarters, took the field anew, defeated the Russians in several sanguinary, but indecisive battles, until the 14th of June, when he obtained over them the decisive and memorable victory of Friedland. On no occasion did he give higher proof of his military coup d'œil and personal intrepidity. Through the whole of the terrible game, which lasted from nine in the morning to eleven in the evening, the chances never changed against him. Beningsen was routed with the loss of 15,000 left dead on the field, seventy pieces of artillery, and a corresponding number of standards, prisoners, and wounded.

"It is an auspicious day, the anniversary of the battle of Marengo," was the expression of Napoleon in the morning, when the first cannon was fired. The omen was fulfilled. The battle of Friedland, like that of Marengo, enabled him to dictate a humiliating peace. He entered Tilsit on the 19th, and prepared immediately to pass the only obstacle between him and Russia, the Niemen.

The Russian army, or the wreck of it, was retreating in dismay; and the emperor Alexander, after having frequently, during this short campaign, rejected the overtures of the French emperor, now humbled himself before his conqueror, and sued for peace.

The first step was the demand and instant concession of an armistice. It was next arranged that the two emperors should have an interview. They met and embraced each other upon a raft on the Niemen, in the presence of their respective suites, and in sight of the two armies, which crowded the opposing banks. A tent having been prepared on the raft, they retired into it to confer in secret for two hours, and came out the best friends in the world, with the suddenness and sentimentalism of German melodrame. Interchanges of visits and hospitalities took place between both the chiefs and the armies. The unhappy king and queen of Prussia joined the imperial party, and were courteously received by Napoleon. It has been said that the queen tried the seductions of her sex and charms, but failed to make any impression on the modern Cæsar.

The peace of Tilsit was concluded on the 9th of July. There were no directly clashing interests between Napoleon and Alexander; and there were neither concessions nor demands on either side, with the exception of a slight accession of territory, which "the magnanimous Alexander" did not scruple to accept, at the cost of his unhappy ally, Frederick William was stripped of half his revenue and five millions of his subjects, which were trans-

ferred to the king of Saxony, as duke of Warsaw, or to Jerome Bonaparte, now created king of Westphalia. "If," said Napoleon, with contemptuous moderation, "the house of Brandenburgh, which was the first to conspire against our independence, still reigns, it is owing to my friendship for the powerful emperor of the north." The king of Prussia deserved neither respect nor pity. He but disgorged the plunder which had fallen to the share of that avowed "robber by trade,"* Frederick, in the first, but not the most infamous, partition of Poland, and his policy during the war of the revolution, was alike unprincipled and mean.

Judged by the light of subsequent events, Napoleon appears to have committed two great errors at this crisis of his fate. Had he carried the war into Russia at a moment when the season was favourable, his army flushed with the confidence of victory, and the Russian army in a state of utter demoralisation and dismay, the result might have been different from that of 1812. If Russia was to be conquered on her own soil, this was the time. His second error was his failure to make good his promise of restoring their independence to the Poles, who would have proved faithful allies, and a powerful bulwark against the "emperor of the north."

The only crowned head throughout continental Europe which did not at this moment bow before the French emperor was that of Gustavus IV., king of Sweden. He was, in consequence, soon dispos-

* "As to me," said he, "I am by trade a robber; but what will they say of the pious empress-queen Maria Theresa?"

sessed of Stralsund and Swedish Pomerania by the French general Brune.

Napoleon, on the 15th of July, set out from Tilsit, passed through Warsaw, Dresden, and Frankfort in triumph, and at five o'clock in the morning of the 27th arrived at St. Cloud. Triumphal arches, processions, addresses, fêtes, and a grand lyric tragedy, called "The Triumph of Trajan," written by the republican dramatist Arnaud, signalised the return of the emperor and his "invincible guard." Never was popular enthusiasm more lively, or individual flattery more base. "Napoleon," said the first president, Seguier, a grave judge, "has ever wished the peace of the world; he has always presented the olive branch to his challengers, who have forced him to accumulate laurels. Napoleon is above human history; he belongs to the heroic ages. He is above admiration: love alone can reach him." All this was spoken to Napoleon's face.

The naval power of England was supreme. Napoleon had no force to oppose to it on its own element, and imagined that he could wield against it indirectly his supremacy on land. His plan was to dictate the exclusion of British ships and British commerce from the ports and markets of continental Europe, and he formally issued his proscription immediately after the battle of Jena, in his famous Berlin decree. The emperor of Russia and king of Prussia lent themselves implicitly to his system, and discontinued by public manifestoes all communication with England. These two sovereigns, and especially the former, had been loaded with

fulsome panegyric both in and out of parliament, whilst the fate of the coalition was yet undecided. A mixture of surprise and shame was felt by the British public when "the magnanimous Alexander" became the humble slave of Napoleon. Of the two satellites the emperor of Russia was really the baser. He could not, like the king of Prussia, plead necessity, or, with his resources, superior force. Both personages were well characterised by Napoleon at St. Helena:* "With the king of Prussia you are master whilst you are the stronger, and your hand is raised; the other (Alexander) is a true Greek of the lower empire, — deceitful, adroit, and hypocritical."

The Russian manifesto was answered, on the part of England, by a state paper which remains a model and chef d'œuvre in that species of composition. It was drawn up by Mr. Canning, whose genius and energy, kept down in the cabinet by the jealous or short-sighted mediocrity of his colleagues, were employed only in defending measures of which he disapproved, and colleagues whom he despised, until the following year, when he could no longer control his disgust.

Napoleon's Berlin decree, of the 21st of November, 1806, was met, on the 7th of January, 1807, by the late ministers, with a retaliatory order in council, which was complained of by the chargé d'affaires of Denmark. Lord Grey asserted the great principle in dispute, with a clearness, firmness, and moderation, which did not characterise the counsels of his successors. "His majesty," says he, "would

* Mém. de St. Hel.

unquestionably have been justified in resorting to the fullest measures of retaliation, in consequence of this unparalleled aggression (the Berlin decree); and other powers would have no right to complain, if the king had immediately proceeded to declare all the countries occupied by the enemy in a state of blockade, and to prohibit all trade in the produce of those countries: for, as the French decree itself expresses it, the law of nature justifies the employing against an enemy the same arms which he makes use of. If third parties suffer from those measures, their demand of reparation must be made to the country which first violates the established usages of war, and the rights of neutral states."* The present ministers followed up the system of protection and retaliation by further and severer orders in council, and first signalised their administration by that equivocal measure, the attack upon Copenhagen and seizure of the Danish fleet. The unscrupulous policy of Napoleon left no doubt of his disregarding, when it served his purpose, the neutral rights of Denmark. He was anticipated by a British naval and military armament, under admiral Gambier and lord Cathcart, who opened a tremendous fire from the sea and land batteries upon Copenhagen on the 2d, took possession of the citadel, dock-yards, and batteries, on the 8th of September, and brought the Danish ships and every article of naval store and equipment away to England.

Parliament re-assembled on the 21st of January, 1808. Its proceedings in this session are peculiarly

* Note in reply to the Danish envoy.

interesting, from the new incidents, pregnant with results the most momentous, which formed the subjects of deliberation, and from its standing conspicuous and alone, the last refuge of free discussion left in Europe. The king's speech, and the addresses and amendments moved in both houses, turned chiefly on the attack upon Copenhagen. After eloquent and earnest debates, the amendments were rejected, and the addresses carried without a division, in either house. But protests against the seizure of the Danish ships were entered by the dukes of Clarence and Norfolk, and lords Grey, Moira, Holland, Lauderdale, Sidmouth, and Erskine. The ministers relied chiefly on the obvious intentions of Napoleon, and the inability or unwillingness of Denmark to maintain her independence. But the morality of this transaction was so questionable that it would not have been adopted by ministers acting upon views even of enlarged policy and prudence. The national safety was not at stake, and more was lost in moral than gained in material strength. It tended to countenance the constant aim of the French emperor, to give a Machiavelian character to British counsels, and render odious to other nations the naval supremacy and maritime code of England, — a code or principle which requires to be tempered and recommended by magnanimity and moderation.

The prince of Wales had wholly abstained from politics and party since the death of Mr. Fox. His other appearances before the public were either frivolous or disadvantageous. The public took part against him in his disputes with the princess of

Wales; and men of sense were disgusted at the weakness with which he seemed to cling, or rather revert, to the vanities of boyhood. He flattered himself, and others flattered him still more inexcusably, upon the graces of his person, when they had long given way to the contrasts of age and corpulency, and upon the degrading skill which he personally exercised in the mechanical details of his dress. But those events which give lustre to his regency were now approaching with the period at which he was to assume the reins of government.

The courts of Spain and Portugal were in a state of complete vassalage to Napoleon. This was not sufficient. From what Mr. Canning happily called "the incompressibility of British commerce," its proscription from the peninsula could be enforced only by the presence of French troops. A French army was accordingly assembled at Bayonne, under the command of general Junot, governor of Paris, and first aid-de-camp of the emperor. The prince regent of Portugal professed his willingness to cut off all communication with England, but declared that if the French armies entered Portugal he would seek refuge in flight, and transfer the seat of government to the Brazils. Napoleon regarded this either as a vain threat, or as an event which would favour the more decent execution of his views. Junot crossed the frontier, and advanced towards Portugal through Spain, not only with the consent of the Spanish court, but with the co-operation of a Spanish army. This had been previously arranged by a compact, scarcely less infamous than the partition of Poland.

The court of Spain at this moment presented a picture of moral corruption and mental imbecility, rarely paralleled even in the history of courts. Charles IV., a weak old man, of the most effete branch of the house of Bourbon, was wholly governed by his queen; who, in her turn, was ruled by the object of her infatuated passion, don Manuel Godoy, elevated by her from the ranks of the king's guards to the highest dignities, and the title of Prince of Peace. Ferdinand, prince of the Asturias, heir apparent, hated the favourite; and, with that impatient thirst for power, which was congenial to a base nature and a bad son, was ready to conspire against his father and mother. This despicable family,—the king, the queen, the favourite, and the son,—had their respective knots of court satellites and intriguers. A Spanish counsellor of state, named Isquierdo, came to Paris, ostensibly to negotiate on behalf of Charles IV. the terms of the cession of the Etrurian states, but really and secretly to carry into effect the personal views of Godoy. The consequence was the negotiation of a treaty for the partition of Portugal between Napoleon, Godoy, and the queen of Etruria, to be carried into execution by the combined armies of Spain and France. This was called, and is frequently referred to as the treaty of Fontainbleau.

Junot crossed the Spanish frontier, on his route to Portugal, in November, 1807; suffered dreadfully from bad weather, worse roads, want of provisions, and the unfitness of his troops, for the most part young conscripts, to bear hardship and privation. Arrived at Alcantara, his junction with the con-

tingent of Spanish troops only rendered his distress still greater. There was no sign of the supplies which Godoy had promised, and he read disaffection and hatred in the looks of the Spanish troops. He ordered eight out of twenty battalions of his allies back to their former quarters; laid the town and country under contributions for provisions, gunpowder, and lead; converted the archives of "the ancient knights of Alcantara" into cartridge-paper; crossed the frontier of Portugal; and, after new and unprecedented sufferings, reached Abrantes. Had not the government of Portugal been most deplorably incapable, the French army might have been destroyed during the hardships and delays of their march. Three thousand men in the position of Los Taillados might have checked the assailants, and defeated the expedition.* The prince regent of Portugal issued his futile commands to the militia and peasantry to stop the approach of the French, when it was too late; and having learned from the Moniteur, placed in his hands by an English agent, that "the house of Braganza had ceased to reign in Europe," embarked, on the 27th of November, with his court for the Brazils.

On the 30th of November, at eight in the morning, without cavalry, cannon, or ammunition, with only 1500 tired troops, Junot entered Lisbon, containing 14,000 regular troops and a hostile population of 300,000 souls! "The house of Braganza," which had reduced a nation to this state, was assuredly unfit to reign in Europe, or any where else.

Events still more important and curious passed in Spain. Notwithstanding the numberless publications, Spanish, French, and English, which profess to give the details of what passed, from the conspiracy of the Escurial to the abdications of Bayonne, the complications of intrigue and infamy during that period still remain uncertain or unrevealed. Here, however, it is necessary to recapitulate from the best authorities only the leading facts *; but these are indispensable, as they formed the prelude to the grand operations of the British government and armies in the peninsula during the regency of George IV.

Charles IV. was taken seriously ill early in the summer of 1807. Ferdinand, prince of the Asturias, fearing that the favourite, Godoy, would usurp the crown upon his father's death, or impatient himself to usurp it in his father's life, was advised to strengthen himself by a secret alliance with Napoleon. He accordingly wrote, in secret, to "the great man of the age," a letter soliciting the hand of a princess of the imperial family. It is absurd to suppose, as many have asserted, that this step was suggested by Napoleon, who did not even deign to answer it. Godoy detected the intrigue, and denounced it to Charles IV., who, in an excess of rage, broke into the apartment of his son, seized his papers, and caused him to be arrested as a traitor who had conspired against the crown and life of his father. On the 30th of October, the crime and the criminal were proclaimed in the official gazette of Madrid and it was supposed that

* Cevallos, Urquijos, Foy, Savary.

the tragedy of Philip and don Carlos was about to be repeated. Godoy, from natural humanity, or because he thought enough had been done to humble his enemy, became mediator between the father and son, induced the latter to throw himself on the mercy of his father and mother, and obtained him their forgiveness and his liberty. Ferdinand had not only the meanness to avow his guilt far beyond the degree of his real criminality, but to accuse and betray his most faithful friends. Charles IV. made a formal communication of his son's guilt, and the merciful weakness of his own paternal heart, to Napoleon, who replied only by demanding the full execution of the treaty of Fontainbleau, and by pouring his armies into Spain. French generals obtained possession of Pampeluna, Barcelona, Figueras, and St. Sebastian, by those dishonourable artifices of disguise and treachery, which are practised only in the predatory warfare of brigands and pirates.

The consternation of the Spanish court was completed by the arrival of the Spanish envoy, Isquierdo, from Paris. Charles IV. resolved to transport himself and his court from Aranjuez to Seville, and seek refuge in Spanish America.

The rumour of the king's departure violently agitated the people at Aranjuez and Madrid. Ferdinand's agents secretly instigated the popular passions against Godoy, as the evil counsellor of the king. A royal decree, contradicting the report of the king's intended departure, and full of confidence in his "intimate ally," Napoleon, restored tranquillity. Godoy, at the same time, ordered troops

for the king's protection from Madrid to Aranjuez. This renewed the popular indignation. Two shots fired at midnight on the 18th of March, by unknown hands, became the signal of insurrection. The furious populace of Aranjuez, reinforced by great numbers who had come to join them from Madrid, overpowered the armed force, or were joined by it; attacked the palace of Godoy, who saved his life by concealing himself; and continued their rage and ravages until five in the morning, when Ferdinand, now called "the beloved," whose name was their rallying cry, informed them, from the balcony of the royal palace, that Godoy was disgraced. The day and night of the 18th passed without disorder. On the 19th Godoy, exhausted with confinement and the want of food, tried to escape from his hiding-place, was observed, and after being outraged and wounded, was with difficulty rescued and made a prisoner by the guards. Ferdinand went to the barracks, where he saw him confined; the wretched man appeared before him, his face besmeared with blood and dirt. "I pray pardon of your majesty," said he to Ferdinand. The latter replied: "Manuel, do you forget that my father is still alive?"—"I must believe that he is dead," rejoined Godoy, "because you command here."* The appearance of a carriage with six mules at the barrack gate to transfer Godoy a prisoner to Grenada, was the real or pretended occasion of fresh and fiercer tumults, which were appeased only by the abdication of Charles IV. in favour of his son Ferdinand.

Murat, grand duke of Berg, and brother-in-law of

* Moniteur.

Napoleon, was appointed generalissimo of the French armies in Spain, and entered Madrid on the 23d of March. Ferdinand received him with the most obsequious distinctions, but was not recognised by him as king of Spain. It would appear that Murat was ignorant of what had passed at Aranjuez: he immediately despatched thither, for the purpose of obtaining correct information, an aid-de-camp, who returned with a protest from Charles IV. against his abdication, as having been extorted from him by rebellious and parricidal violence. Ferdinand and his friends maintained that the abdication was voluntary*; but it is strange that the king should freely abdicate in favour of a son whom, but a month before, he was about to consign as a traitor to the block, and of whose guilt, whilst he pardoned it, his opinion remained unchanged.

Napoleon, the better to direct the movements in Spain by being near the scene of action, arrived at Bayonne on the night of the 14th of April. Murat told Ferdinand that the emperor was on his way to Madrid, and insinuated the courtesy of meeting him. Ferdinand determined to meet Napoleon at Burgos, but sent before him his brother don Carlos, who advanced from Burgos to Vittoria and Tolosa, without news of the emperor. Ferdinand hesitated; general Savary came opportunely to remove his doubts: he proceeded to Burgos, and advanced to Vittoria without finding his august visitor. A remarkable letter from Napoleon, and fresh artifices employed by Savary, induced him to continue his journey to

* Ferdinand's letters to his father at Bayonne, and the statement of don Pedro Cevallos.

Bayonne. Such is the Spanish version of this momentous journey. Other accounts, which are entitled to credit, and even the letter of Urquijos to Cuesta, would make it appear that Ferdinand required no persuasion from Murat or Savary; that he was eager to meet Napoleon for the purpose of intriguing against his father; that his intention took Napoleon by surprise; and that don Carlos was sent to prepare Napoleon for the unexpected visit. It would appear, from one of the letters addressed by the queen to Murat, that she feared nothing so much as the "horrible falsehoods, under the guise of truth, which her son and his faction would tell the emperor at Bayonne." The letter of Napoleon favours this supposition. It reached Ferdinand at Vittoria, refused expressly to acknowledge him as king, rebuked him even for his conduct to his father, and conveyed no wish to see him. Had Ferdinand chosen to halt here, and return to Madrid, it is not probable that the French would have forced him to his journey's end. On the 20th of April he arrived at Bayonne. Napoleon pronounced that Ferdinand had extorted his father's abdication by violence; that he must himself abdicate in his turn, according to his own precedent; that the Bourbons should no longer reign in Spain; and that he might have, as an indemnity, the throne of Etruria. He was thunderstruck, but had the firmness to refuse; and soon found himself a prisoner.

The French emperor, either on the approach of Ferdinand, or earlier, had invited the king and queen of Spain to Bayonne: they readily accepted his invitation, and arrived on the 30th of April. Godoy,

released by Murat, had arrived two or three days before.

Charles IV., naturally weak, and now broken down by age and affliction, was easily persuaded to abdicate his crown, to the exclusion of his undutiful son, and accept an asylum, luxury, and repose, in France. He was chiefly influenced by the queen, who, seeing that she must choose between the throne of Spain and the favourite, decided for abdication, exile, and the society of Godoy.

The father and son had not yet had an interview. Ferdinand, his suite, and his guards, went in procession to meet the old king on his arrival; but were received by him with reproaches. He told the guards they had betrayed their duty at Aranjuez; and when Ferdinand wished to follow him after the ceremony of kissing his hand, in this instance so heartless and revolting, the old king turned round upon him, and said, "Have you not yet sufficiently outraged my grey hairs?" On the 2d of May Charles IV. addressed to Ferdinand a letter, said to have been dictated by Napoleon, but evidently in unison with the bitterness of an outraged father's feelings: "Your conduct to me, and your intercepted letters," said the unhappy father, "have raised a wall of brass between you and the throne of Spain. It is neither your interest, nor that of your country, that you should return to it." The latter part of this paternal oracle is fulfilled; the other still hangs over the perjured head of Ferdinand.

The old king executed his deed of abdication on the 5th of May; desired, for the first time, the attendance of his son; and in the presence of Napoleon, the queen, Godoy, and others, commanded

him to deliver, by the next morning, his formal abdication in favour of Napoleon, on pain of being pronounced a rebel, with all those who should abet him in his refusal. Ferdinand began some observations in reply; but was interrupted by his father, who started from his chair, and reproached him with having plotted against the throne and life of his father at the Escurial and Aranjuez. The queen, his mother, joined in loading him with reproaches and execrations, called him traitor and parricide, and intreated Napoleon to shed his blood upon the scaffold.* It has been stated that she even bastardised him in the presence of her husband: this, however, is scarcely credible, or even consistent. Ferdinand, in one of his letters, reminding his father of this scene, speaks of "having been insulted by his father with appellations the most humiliating *in the presence of his venerable mother.*" This reference to his mother's presence as an aggravation would rather imply that the reproach of bastardy came from the king. It has been stated† that Ferdinand's conscious guilt manifestly betrayed itself; and that between remorse, baseness, and the influence of his immediate advisers, he consented to abdicate. Charles IV., the queen, Godoy, and their suite, proceeded to the palace of Compiegne. Ferdinand and his brother don Carlos were lodged with Talleyrand at Valencay. Talleyrand was opposed to the usurpation of the Spanish crown, and Napoleon wreaked his vengeance with malicious humour upon the minister, by appointing him chief gaoler over the Spanish princes.

* Mém. du Gen. Foy.

† Foy, Hist. de la Guerre, &c.

Napoleon, thus invested with the sovereignty of Spain, dictated to the Spanish nation a constitution resembling that of the French empire, and a king in the person of his brother Joseph, actual king of Naples. The constitution was liberal and wise; the king a good man; and both would have been blessings to Spain, if that essential element of all good government were not wanting, — the national consent. The best government, like the best religion, becomes odious when propagated by the sword.

In the mean time, the tempest of Spanish resistance had not only gathered but begun. The departure of the royal family to Bayonne, the overbearing, but not oppressive military pomp of Murat, and his arbitrary, but generous release of Godoy, exasperated the people of Madrid. Drawing-rooms, coffee-houses, the public walks, the pulpits, and the confessionals echoed menace and imprecation. Murat was apprised of his danger; but, confident in the courage of the French soldiers and his own, — eager, moreover, for a tumult, which should serve as a pretext for usurping the authority of the Spanish junta of government, which he despised, — he took no precaution.

The sight of mule carriages ready equipped on the 2d of May in the court of Escurial, to convey the queen of Etruria and the young prince, don Francisco, to Bayonne, collected a vast assemblage of the people. It was supposed that don Antonio, left by Ferdinand at the head of the governing junta, was about to abandon the capital. An ominous murmur pervaded the multitude. The elements of popular commotion suddenly and fiercely exploded. Murat

appeared on horseback at the head of his guard, and gave orders for the troops encamped outside Madrid to enter the city with fixed bayonets and drawn swords at the pas-de-charge. In the mean time more than 500 French soldiers of the garrison, who were off duty and walking idly in the streets, without arms, order, or suspicion, were either massacred or grievously wounded. The French columns entered by the gates of the east and north, stopped the massacre, and in a few minutes suppressed the insurrection, which they treated rather as a tumult. Sixty Spaniards, taken with arms in their hands, were shot on the Prado. About forty prisoners, taken by the imperial guard, were executed the following morning, only a few minutes before Murat had sent orders to spare their lives. Considering the desire of vengeance natural under such excitement, and the expediency of a severe example, these executions leave no stain upon the humanity of the French army, or of Murat.

The tumults and massacre of the 2d of May at Madrid gave the signal for general insurrection through Spain. The principality of the Asturias took the lead. The impulse was communicated to Gallicia, St. Ander, and Leon. Cadiz, Seville, Zaragosa, Badajos, Valladolid, every city, town, village, and district of the kingdom, soon presented a spectacle of patriotism and atrocity at once inspiring and appalling. The fury of the populace was equally barbarous and blind. Spaniards of known patriotism fell victims to the suspicious credulity and savage fury of the populace, merely because they hesitated to embark in the horrors of what seemed a hopeless

contest, or humanely interfered to prevent massacre. The lips of childhood were taught to pronounce the assassination of a Frenchman meritorious in the eyes of God. A catechism, drawn up by a bishop for the instruction of children by their parents, had the following question and answer:—Q. "Is it a sin to kill a Frenchman?"—A. "No, father; it is a meritorious act to deliver our country from those insolent oppressors." The influence of superstitious or profligate monks over an ignorant peasantry gave a dreadful and distempered action to that most cruel of all instincts, religious fanaticism. But in revolution it is necessary to compound with the passions. Revolutionary committees or juntas were soon formed in every town and district, and a supreme junta of government, acting in the name of Ferdinand VII., formed itself at Seville.

It has been frequently said of Napoleon, that he misjudged and despised the undisciplined force and fury of the Spanish insurrection. Napoleon knew too well that it is the passions, and not science, that achieve revolutions where physical resistance is to be overcome. He had, accordingly, prepared for the contest with profound and wide combinations, and an army of from 70,000 to 80,000 men, commanded by three marshals and two experienced generals.* This army, distributed in corps over Biscay, Navarre, Catalonia, Leon, the two Castiles, Arragon, Andalusia, after a series of sanguinary conflicts, obtained only one victory which could be called decisive, that of Medina del Rio Seco, gained

* Murat (generalissimo) Moncey, Bessières, Duhesme, Dupont.

by Bessières with the imperial guard, which opened to king Joseph the route to Madrid. The Spaniards, on the other hand, not only maintained a system of harassing and destructive warfare, but gained the battle of Baylen; the result of which was, that Dupont, with his army of 18,000 men, surrendered prisoners of war to Castanos and his raw levies. Dupont lost this battle only through incapacity, momentary infatuation, or criminal design; but its moral effect was not the less great throughout Spain and Europe. From it resulted directly the raising of the siege of Zaragoza, after an heroic resistance, which some British tourists have disfigured by the tawdry colours of romance. But the most important result was the flight of king Joseph from the capital, the enthusiasm excited in England, and the alliance now regularly contracted between the British and Spanish nations.

CHAP. XIV.

1808–9.

SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY'S FIRST EXPEDITION TO PORTUGAL. — CONVENTION OF CINTRA. — RETREAT OF SIR JOHN MOORE.

GEORGE IV. has been praised for abandoning party on the death of Mr. Fox. This is one of the many instances in which a vice of character becomes a virtue in a prince. His ardour had become cool, and his sincerity dubious much earlier; but habit made him bow to the authority, or vanity made him bask in the lustre, of Mr. Fox's name. His subsequent neutrality was the effect, not of enlarged views, but of natural indolence, and of political and personal alienation. At this stage of his life, the more distinguished of his early friends had dropped into the grave, or withdrawn from him in disgust. Sheridan and lord Erskine alone remained to share his orgies and amusements rather than his counsels.

The resistance of the Spaniards to Napoleon was hailed in England with unbounded and unfeigned demonstrations of joy. Ministers were stimulated on every side to embark in this new hazard the policy and resources of the country. Sheridan made himself conspicuous in the house of commons as the Corypheus of the Spanish cause. There can be no

doubt that he acted in accordance with his master's wishes, of which he had an instinctive perception; but the prince himself appears to have continued without deviation the vulgar routine of his frivolities and pleasures.

In the early part of the summer of 1808, a deputation of Spanish gentlemen arrived in London from the insurgent province of the Asturias. They were received with acclamations by the populace when they appeared in the streets, and invited to a public dinner by the merchants, bankers, and traders of London. The king's ministers distinguished this banquet by their presence, and the foreign secretary (Mr. Canning,) acted as interpreter to the deputies on the occasion. To popular shouts, and the honours of a tavern feast, succeeded the more decisive test of large contributions in arms and money.

A generous sympathy with the Spaniards had in all this the least possible share. His majesty's ministers, in their destitution, were ready to grasp at any thing in the shape of foreign alliance. The muster of his majesty's faithful allies was paraded in all its lamentable and ludicrous nudity at the dinner. After "Ferdinand VII.," a crouching captive in France, were toasted, "the prince Regent of Portugal," who had outraged the British nation, and deserted after he had ruined his country; "the king of Naples," who was owing every hour of his existence as a king to British protection in the island of Sicily; and that eccentric personage, then so near his extinction, Gustavus IV. of Sweden. The public support of the Spanish cause may be traced to other motives still more unworthy. In this very session

of parliament, the majority of the people by their petitions, and of the parliament by their votes, pronounced the continued exclusion of the British and Irish catholics from their common rights, out of pure religious antipathy. But now they fraternised with monks, popery, and the inquisition in Spain, from self-interest and base fear of the power and genius of the enemy.

There was an exception to the general enthusiasm; and it comprised some of the most enlightened and thinking men in England. These did not fear, and therefore did not personally hate or slander, Napoleon. They neither disliked the Spaniards, nor thought them incapable of freedom from their being catholics and superstitious. The Romans, they knew, were a superstitious people whilst spreading conquest and civilisation. But the Romans fought for conquest and for Rome, not for paganism. The Spaniards, on the contrary, fought avowedly and only for the two great causes of their debasement—the inquisition, and the most corrupt and imbecile royal race of Europe. The success of the Spaniards appeared therefore hopeless; and even if certain, its result would be the continuance of ignorance and slavery. This view has been but too faithfully borne out, and many a Spanish patriot has since regretted the constitution and dynasty of Napoleon.*

Parliament was prorogued on the 20th of August without having sanctioned any specific measure in reference to Spain. The course to be pursued was

* "Les Espagnols," said Napoleon at St. Helena, "pleureront long-temps la constitution de Bayonne."

left to the untrammelled discretion of ministers: but the speech of the commissioners in the king's name at the prorogation announced "that Spain, nobly struggling against a usurper, was no longer the enemy, but the most intimate ally of England." A treaty, offensive and defensive, was accordingly entered into with the supreme Spanish junta of Seville, acting in the name and on the behalf of Ferdinand VII.; and British troops, with a fresh supply of money and arms, were embarked for the Peninsula.

Among the regiments sent on this service was the prince of Wales's 10th light dragoons, then changed to hussars. He went to Portsmouth, and directed in person the embarkation of the regiment. The following speech was addressed by him to the corps at parting:—"It is one of the most painful regrets of my life, that circumstances do not admit of my accompanying you. To brigadier-general Slade I present my sword: he will lead you; and to go under his command is, I know, as much your wish as it is mine." When taking leave of the officers he burst into tears, and both officers and men shared his emotion. There is no ground for classing the account of this scene with the sycophant flatteries which were so common at the time. His long familiarity with the regiment, which was a source of pride, and an object of constant care to him, was likely to have endeared them to each other. Suspicion, indeed, may attach to the frequency with which he was described as shedding tears. He visited, it was said, lord Lake in his last illness this year, "burst into tears, and fainted away" at the

bed side of his dying friend. This too is not only possible, but perfectly consistent with the known selfishness of his feelings. There is a fastidious, pampered, selfish sensibility of the nerves, as well as a humane sympathy with the suffering of a fellow-creature and a friend.

The British campaigns of the Peninsular war, one of the most memorable in the annals of mutual destruction among nations, and decidedly the most memorable and glorious in the annals of England, began in the summer of this year. It is necessary to recur for a moment to Junot's occupation of Portugal. Junot, by an enterprise of remarkable hardihood, obtained complete and quiet possession of that kingdom without firing a gun. The ferment in Spain, however, soon communicated itself across the frontier to his Spanish auxiliaries. Sixteen Spanish battalions revolted at Oporto, and were disarmed by him, with the rest of their countrymen. His force was thus reduced to about 25,000 men. Insurrection broke out in the north of Portugal; he was threatened in his communications with France. The Spanish insurrection of Andalusia and Estramadura, and the appearance of a British force at Ayamonte, disturbed the province of the Algarves in the south. The French garrisons and detachments were, after a short time, generally enveloped in insurrection, and in some minor conflicts overpowered by numbers. Junot's position, already critical, seemed desperate upon the appearance of a British fleet in the Tagus with general Spencer and his division on board. He called a council of officers: the result of this and a second military council was, that Junot should con-

centrate his force upon Lisbon, with a view to defend the capital and left bank of the Tagus to the last extremity; securing at the same time his retreat, by Elvas, on Madrid, Segovia, or Valladolid.

Whilst general Spencer, who had abandoned Portugal, very opportunely for the French, was seeking, but not meeting, adventures in the south, and sir Arthur Wellesley, who had sailed from Cork on his first Peninsular expedition, with from 9,000 to 10,000 men, was conferring with the junta of Gallicia and the bishop of Oporto. Junot had time to execute the essential, and by far the most difficult part of his design — that of concentrating his forces towards Lisbon. Sir Arthur Wellesley began the landing of his troops on the 1st, at the little fortress of Figueira, had not completed it until the 8th, and, being reinforced by general Spencer, commenced his first movement on the 9th of August. The French general, Laborde, with a force short of 3,000 men, advanced from Lisbon to watch and retard, rather than resist, the march of the British, gave battle on the 17th, at the village of Roliça, signalised himself in this unequal contest, and fell back in good order. On the 19th the British commander took a position in advance at the village of Vimieiro, where he halted twenty-four hours. On the night of the 20th, or rather at day-break on the 21st, a staff officer hastily announced to him the advance of Junot with his main army. The British general would not believe it; day-light, however, convinced him of the fact. An advanced guard of French cavalry was seen moving rapidly from Torres Vedras. The surprise of sir Arthur Wellesley was natural; Junot's

disposable force was scarcely half sir Arthur's, now further reinforced by the divisions which had just landed under generals Acland and Anstruther. But with the extraordinary activity and uncalculating boldness, which in him supplied the place, or concealed the want of higher military qualities for a time, he had left Lisbon, concentrated his disposable force at Torres Vedras, and, at the head of only 9,200 men, tried the desperate hazard of a battle with 16,000 British troops, supported by Portuguese auxiliaries. The French charged impetuously at several points, were foiled in the first shock by the steadiness and numbers of the British, and after a short but gallant conflict retreated on Torres Vedras, with the loss of ten pieces of cannon, and 2,000 men killed, wounded, and prisoners.

Sir Harry Burrard had arrived to take the chief command on the 20th; witnessed the battle of the 21st as a spectator; took the command after the engagement, and overruled sir Arthur Wellesley's proposal of an immediate pursuit. He had also checked the advance of sir Arthur the preceding day. The still formidable organisation of the French in their retreat, their great superiority in cavalry, the expectation of reinforcements under sir John Moore, and the utter deficiency of the British in cavalry and artillery horses, were the grounds of his opinion. The question between the two British commanders is speculative, uncertain, and purely military; but the tide of opinion has of course run in favour of the great captain: yet, with respect to his proposed advance on the 20th, it should not be forgotten that the descent of Junot from the Torres Vedras

took him by surprise on the morning of the 21st, and that he had failed to make any serious impression on the much smaller retreating army of Laborde on the 17th.

Junot halted at a short distance from the field of battle, before the defile of Torres Vedras, re-formed his battalions with quickness and facility, and called a council of war. He held a second council next morning (the 22d). Upon a comparison of his resources, with those of the British, his position was judged untenable. It was resolved that nothing remained but to fall back upon Lisbon, and defend it to the last extremity, or obtain "an honourable capitulation." Accordingly general Kellerman, son of the marshal, was sent to the British head-quarters, under pretence of conferring respecting the prisoners and wounded, with written terms of capitulation in his pocket.

Sir H. Burrard, who had superseded sir Arthur Wellesley on the evening of the 21st, was himself superseded by sir Hugh Dalrymple on the morning of the 22d. The folly of such arrangements is obvious and flagrant; it is to be ascribed to the ministers at home, who had dictated points of attack, and the plan of the campaign with equal incapacity and presumption. Sir Hugh had hardly assumed the command, when Kellerman was seen approaching with an escort of cavalry, and a flag of truce: the result was the conclusion of an armistice, and of the noted convention of Cintra, in pursuance of which the French were to be conveyed with their arms, baggage, liberty, and honour, in British ships to France.

The victory of Vimiera produced transports of joy in England; but the convention which followed it was received, or rather rejected, literally with execration. Public addresses for an enquiry poured in from all quarters to the throne: of these the most energetic, as well as important, was the address of the city of London. George III. received and rebuked those who presented it, in the arbitrary temper of his earlier years. There was certainly something offensive and ridiculous in the self-complacency with which the citizens censured, at a distance, general officers of experience and character. An alderman and pastry-cook of the name of Birch declared that he could not, consistently with "his honour, as an officer of volunteers," withhold his disapprobation!

Notwithstanding the reluctance of the king, and of the government, the public feeling was so strong, that a board of enquiry, composed of seven general officers, was appointed by a commission under the crown. Sir Hugh Dalrymple was recalled, sir Arthur Wellesley returned on leave of absence; and after some time sir Harry Burrard resigned his command, and also came to England. They were all three put by the public upon the defence of their characters; but the official responsibility and chief odium fell upon sir Hugh Dalrymple.

Never were court cabal, and the power and influence of political party, more scandalously abused than in vindicating sir Arthur Wellesley, at the expense of his brother officers. He was received by the duke of York with an ostentatious distinction in his favour, on his arrival. The king took occasion to

be seen conversing graciously with him, whilst the London address was read to him at the levee. The ministerial newspapers proclaimed that he would have followed up his victory, and annihilated the French, had he not been checked and superseded by sir Harry Burrard; that though he had reluctantly signed the armistice by order of sir Hugh Dalrymple, he had no share in it; and that he had protested against the convention in the strongest terms. At last the enquiry commenced; the proceedings were interesting, curious, and discreditable. The three commanders gave their several versions, both military and diplomatic, in detail, and questioned, contradicted, and criminated each other. Publicity, however was given to the evidence, and opinion, as between the commanders, was re-adjusted.

It proved that sir Arthur Wellesley was the very person who had arranged the terms of the armistice with Kellerman; that he signed it of his own free will, having objected faintly to one immaterial article only; that lord Castlereagh in communicating to sir Hugh Dalrymple his appointment, instructed him "to cultivate the confidence, and profit by the advice, of sir Arthur Wellesley," that sir Hugh did accordingly take and defer to his advice, and sir Arthur himself avowed having expressed his most cordial concurrence in the opinion that the French should be *permitted* to evacuate Portugal. This was obviously equivalent to a cordial concurrence in the convention. Sir Arthur Wellesley at the same time declared, that "he lamented the attempts made through the medium of the public prints to injure the reputation of sir Hugh Dalrymple, and

disclaimed having authorised them by himself or his friends." It might be asked why he did not come forward and silence his partisans long before, whilst day after day they were upholding his reputation by what he knew to be falsehoods, at the expense of another officer's fame and honour? Sir Hugh came out of the enquiry with a decided advantage; and, in reference to sir Harry Burrard, the board unanimously approved the discretion which he had exercised in forbidding sir Arthur Wellesley's advance. Their report expressed no opinion on the armistice and convention. They were called upon, by a letter from the Horse Guards, to give their opinions and reasons severally upon both. Of the seven members six approved, and one disapproved, the armistice — four approved, and three disapproved, the convention. Lord Moira gave his reasons in detail for condemning both.* He suppressed one which certainly weighed with him, — his subserviency to the popular gale.

If the convention was blameable the fault lay with the ministers. They had placed the army, in succession, under three different commanders within forty-eight hours, and during the crisis of a battle; and they had neglected not only cavalry and artillery horses, but the commissariat. The present lord Londonderry, in his narrative of the war, gives "an outline of the impression produced in England by the first intelligence of the convention, which was communicated to him in a letter." This "out-

* The board consisted of sir David Dundas, lords Moira, Heathfield, and Pembroke, generals Craig, Nugent, and Nicholls.

line" consists of seven specific charges against it. If, as it may be presumed from his preface, the noble author's correspondent was his brother, lord Castlereagh, then at the head of the war department, the "outline" was an after-thought, and not the first impression of that minister. Lord Castlereagh was so delighted with the first intelligence of the convention of Cintra, that he gave vent to his joy in the middle of the night by firing the tower guns. But when the popular outcry against it became resistless, he attempted to shield himself, his colleagues, and the favourite commander, by offering up as a victim the unfortunate sir Hugh Dalrymple, to whom the king's displeasure was formally communicated.

Sir John Moore had succeeded sir Harry Burrard in the chief command of the British troops in Portugal. On the 6th of October he received orders from England to advance, with 25,000 men, into Spain, where he should be joined by 10,000 more, actually on their way from England to Corrunna, under the command of sir David Baird. It was left to his discretion whether he should enter Spain by sea or land. He chose the latter, set out on the 26th of October upon his fatal, but not inglorious, expedition, reached the frontier at Almeida on the 8th, and occupied Salamanca with his advanced posts on the 13th of November. Supposing this direct route impassable by gun carriages and cavalry, he sent his artillery and cavalry with an escort by the circuitous route of Elvas, Badajos, Merida, and Talavera, to fall into and rejoin him by the great road of Madrid and Valladolid. This

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division of his force, and the additional march of 150 leagues, has been severely judged by French military writers; not, however, as the fault of sir John Moore, but as part of the system of slow and safe movements adopted by the British generals.* Sir John Moore ought, perhaps, to have staked the lives and efforts of his men with less caution and humanity. The French general gave more to hazard and drew more recklessly upon the stamina of human effort and endurance. "Wherever two men can pass abreast there is a passage for an army," said Napoleon to general Macdonald during the famous passage of the latter over the Alps.

But before sir John Moore had yet reached Salamanca, or crossed the Spanish frontier, the hour had gone by and the fate of his expedition was decided. It is necessary to glance back for a moment to the sagacious, rapid, astonishing, and characteristic movements of the French emperor.

In the autumn of 1808 Napoleon saw the full extent and force of the Spanish insurrection: "Godoy and Murat," said he "have deceived me: I should have made war not upon the Spaniards but upon their king."† He directed 80,000 veteran troops from their German cantonments upon the Pyrenees, with the resolution of placing himself at their head. It did not escape him that England might organise another German coalition whilst he was engaged in subjugating the Spaniards. He accordingly appointed a meeting with the emperor of Russia at Erfurth, and summoned the princes of

* Victoires, Conquêtes. &c. † Mém. Mil.

the German confederation to the rendezvous. In the midst of court festivities, and the parade of dependent princes in his train, Napoleon admitted the emperor of Russia alone on the footing of equality, obtained from him a secret pledge to support the title of Joseph to the throne of Spain, was at Paris on the 18th of October, and beyond the Pyrenees at Vittoria on the 5th of November, advanced rapidly upon Burgos, directing in person the centre of his army, defeated and scattered the Spanish armies of Blake, Belvedere, and Castanos, on his way, had his head-quarters at the Retiro on the 3d of December, summoned Madrid three times in vain, brought his cannon to bear upon the town, with a view to strike terror rather than destroy, took possession of it on the 4th, and attempted to conciliate the people by strict discipline, and a general amnesty. The supreme junta had, in the mean time, taken flight to Badajos.

Sir John Moore halted at Salamanca. His situation was one of the most discouraging. He found the course of operations dictated to him by the ministry ill chosen, the Spanish armies with which he was to co-operate dispersed, the Spanish junta ignorant, incapable, and perverse, and Napoleon with his lieutenants bearing upon him with an overwhelming force. His opinion wavered. This, in a great emergency, is more fatal than resolute error.

He determined to fall back upon Portugal, and sent the necessary orders to sir David Baird, in Gallicia. Officers in his own army, of more conceit than capacity or experience, presumed to censure the determination of the commander-in-chief. The

Spanish junta teased him. Mr. Frere, the accredited British minister, full of pedant pride in the success of some literary puerilities,—like the rhetorician who harangued Hannibal on the art of war,—dictated military movements to a general of reputation, who had been a soldier from a boy; and even sent him an impertinent communication by a French *intrigrant*, named Charmilly. Sir John Moore ordered Charmilly from his presence. He should also have rebuked Mr. Frere to his proper level, and not only rebuked but punished the murmuring insubordination, which seized even his personal staffs, and impaired the confidence and discipline of the men.*

Intelligence reached him that Madrid was imitating the resistance of Zaragoza; the junta and Mr. Frere urged upon him the enthusiasm of the Spaniards, and the necessity of operating to relieve "the heroic capital;" he abandoned his intention of a retrograde movement, and formed the design of advancing upon Valladolid, so as to menace the enemy's communications. An intercepted despatch fortunately discovered to him an error which would have proved fatal, and the real position of the enemy. Madrid had held out, as already stated, but a single day! A French corps was advancing by Talavera upon Badajos, under Lefebvre, to cut off his retreat upon Portugal; another under Soult was marching to intercept the route to Corunna; and Napoleon himself was advancing upon Valladolid with the corps of Ney, and the cavalry of the imperial guard under Bessieres, to manœuvre according to circum-

* See Lord Londonderry's Narrative of the War.

stances, with the hope of making the British lay down their arms. Moore, thus formidably pressed, marched upon Toro, formed a junction with Baird on the 21st of December, was at the head of 30,000 fighting men, and concerted with the Spanish general, Romana, an attack upon the corps of Soult. Lord Paget distinguished himself, in passing, by a brilliant affair of cavalry at Sagahun. The British troops supposed themselves approaching a decisive battle, and looked with confidence to the result. Napoleon, on the other hand, who was aware of the British movement against Soult, announced in an order of the day, "that the hour was at last arrived when the English leopard should fly before the French eagles," and had his head-quarters on the 25th at Tordesillas.

Intelligence had in the mean time reached sir J. Moore, that Soult, reinforced by the corps of Junot, which had capitulated in Portugal, was advancing upon Astorga, whilst Napoleon himself was moving upon the same point by the great road of Madrid, with the corps of Ney and cavalry of Bessieres. To risk a battle under such circumstances could only have been folly or despair. Dividing his force, he retreated by two routes upon Benevente, where he arrived on the 26th; his rear-guard separated from the advanced guard of the French only by the river Esla. The British had broken down the bridge in their rear. General Lefebvre Desnouettes forded the river at the head of three squadrons of the chasseurs of the imperial guard, attacked the British pickets, whom he thought unsupported, soon found himself enveloped by the British cavalry under lord

Paget and general Charles Stewart (lord Londonderry), retreated, and was wounded and made prisoner, with about seventy men, in his attempt to recross the Esla. The French again formed themselves on the opposite bank, for a desperate charge to rescue their commander, when they found their return effectually checked by the advance of five light field pieces, which opened upon them with grape shot. It has been said that Napoleon witnessed this affair from a distant position, and was humiliated to find the chasseurs of his guard unable to withstand British cavalry. This is an idle story, and still idler boast. Napoleon was at Val-de-Ras, several leagues off, and the French chasseurs fought gallantly, and retreated in good order from an overwhelming superiority of numbers.

Sir John Moore continued his retreat upon Villafranca. It was now the end of December. The weather and roads were dreadful. Baggage, ammunition, and guns, were destroyed and abandoned, and horses shot by their riders to prevent their falling into the hands of the enemy. The army threw aside all discipline, and the horrors of the retreat became indescribable. The men deserted their colours, abandoned themselves to pillage, and were left behind to perish by hunger, cold, drunkenness, the sabres of the enemy, or the rage and vengeance of the Spanish peasantry, infuriated by the horrible excesses of the British on their route. The superior officers lost all control, and the inferior shared the excesses of the men. But the chief officers, in the first instance, had assumed the license of opinion of a civil democracy; and the body of the

army, corrupted by their example, now committed the excesses of military anarchy. Sir John Moore unhappily lost his temper, and issued angry orders of the day, in a case demanding the sternness of Roman discipline. He paraded, by way of example, a few marauding stragglers who rejoined their ranks, cut, mutilated, and bleeding, from the sabres of the French cavalry. "I am sure that British troops never looked upon a spectacle more appalling than those few presented," says the marquis of Londonderry, in his "Narrative of the War," a work always interesting, and where the fraternal bias, or his personal admiration * did not intervene, written with frankness and good taste. After a march of twenty-five leagues in forty-eight hours, sir J. Moore arrived at Lugo on the 6th of January. The encumbered state of the roads, occasioned by the quantity of baggage, ammunition, carts, guns, and slain horses, abandoned by the British, fortunately retarded the march of the French. Napoleon having ordered marshal Soult to "drive the English into the sea," had fallen back upon Valladolid, whence he reached Paris on the 23d of January, to prepare against the storm which was gathering against him in Germany.

Sir John Moore halted his troops at Lugo from the 6th to the 9th. On the 8th, both armies prepared for action. A partial affair took place, and sir John Moore continued his retreat next morning. On the 11th, the British advanced-guard beheld the walls of Corunna and the sea, with a cry of joy like

* Lord Castlereagh was his brother, and the Duke of Wellington the "god of his idolatry."

that which burst from the Greeks in the retreat of the ten thousand. From the 12th to the 16th, sir John Moore was occupied in strengthening his position, and embarking his sick, wounded, cavalry, and part of his artillery, ready to give battle, but unmolested by the French. On the 16th, marshal Soult, being now joined by the columns of his rear-guard, attacked the British. He charged the right with great impetuosity; but was repulsed by Moore's judiciously placed reserves. Sir David Baird, who commanded the right, had his arm shot away; and sir John Moore himself, whilst directing and cheering a charge of the 42d, was mortally wounded by a cannon-ball. Sir John Hope succeeded to the command, the French were repulsed at all points, night separated the combatants, and next day the British troops were embarked for England.

The body of sir John Moore was laid in a hasty soldier's grave, with a recommendation to the enemy, who bestowed funeral honours on his remains. His last words were, that "he hoped his country would do him justice." This justice has long been rendered to his memory, in spite of the efforts of party and cabal to make him the screen, as he had been the victim, of an incapable minister.

CHAP. XV.

1809, 1810.

ENQUIRY INTO THE CONDUCT OF THE DUKE OF YORK. — SIR ARTHUR WELLESLEY'S SECOND PENINSULAR CAMPAIGN. — WALCHEREN EXPEDITION.

THE session of parliament was opened by commission on the 13th of January. Those parts of the king's speech which related to the compaigns in Portugal and Spain were vehemently disapproved; but the ministerial addresses were agreed to without division or amendment in both houses. Lord St. Vincent having expressed his disgust at the measures, and his contempt for the ignorance of ministers, who did not know, he said, as much of geography as a school-boy, declared that it was probably the last time he should address their lordships, wished them "a good night," and left the house. The share of ministers in the convention of Cintra, and retreat of sir John Moore, was afterwards made the subject of specific inculpatory motions, which were supported by minorities stronger in the force of truth and talent than of numbers. A domestic topic soon came before parliament, and eclipsed every other for a time.

The duke of York had obtained great and exag-

gerated credit as commander-in-chief, for the improved organisation, discipline, and efficiency which he had given to the British army. His official regularity and easiness of access rendered him popular with the great mass of officers. There were, however, some disappointed or discontented spirits,—exceptions perhaps inevitable,—who charged him, in pamphlets and newspapers, with allowing profligate connections, and corrupt influence to dispose of the patronage of his office. The public had not yet forgotten his unfortunate campaigns. His prodigal sensualities, embarrassments, careless temper, and weak character, gave a colour to accusations, however grossly disreputable. It was rumoured and believed that advancement in the army was made the subject of corrupt traffic by his paramours, with his participation or connivance. A discarded mistress, towards whom he had violated his promise of a paltry four hundred a year, made disclosures, true or false, of their joint traffic in the patronage of the army. Her confidant, a militia colonel and member of parliament, brought the matter before the house of commons, and the whole kingdom was occupied with the duke of York, Mrs. Clarke, and colonel Wardle. The case stated exparte by colonel Wardle was so scandalous and circumstantial, that the friends of the duke could not resist enquiry. An investigation at the bar of the house was ordered unanimously. Some, however, advised a select committee, on very different grounds. Lord Folkstone recommended it as better calculated for the ends of justice, and Mr. Wilberforce "besought the

house to avoid the indecorum of calling *certain persons* to their bar."

On Friday, January 27th, colonel Wardle laid his case before the house of commons, and on Wednesday, the 1st of February, Mrs. Clarke made her appearance as a witness.

The adventures, vicissitudes, and fascinations of Mrs. Clarke, had been for some time the engrossing theme of conversation and curiosity. She was a person of obscure origin, who had deserted her husband, passed through the usual alternations of luxury and destitution, which mark the career of "certain persons," as Mr. Wilberforce decorously expressed it,—ruining, by her prodigalities, those whom she fascinated by her charms, until she had passed the morning of life, when it was her fortune to make the conquest of the duke of York. The appearance of this modern Phryne at the bar of parliament fully vindicated the interest which she had excited, and the renown which preceded her. She was of, or under, the middle stature of the sex. Her figure and beauty were still scarcely impaired by age. But the secret of her sway lay chiefly in her exercised, if not accomplished, faculties and manner. Her obeisance, on presenting herself at the bar of the house, was pronounced a chef-d'œuvre of theatric grace. In the course of her examination she sometimes discovered the pert effrontery of women of her class. But the ease, adroitness, and pleasantry of her replies, and her artful command, at pleasure, of self-possession and emotion, soon obtained her personal as well as political partisans. When the freedom, point, or levity of her answers,

were checked with cries of "order," and appeals to the dignity of the house, by Mr. Perceval and Mr. Wilberforce, others encouraged and cheered her. "Who," asked the attorney-general, "brought you that message?"—"A particular friend of the duke's."—"Who was he?"—"Mr. Taylor the shoemaker of Bond Street." (A laugh.)—"By whom did you send your desires to the duke?"—"By my own pen."—"I mean who brought the letter?"—"The same ambassador."—"What ambassador?"—"Why, the ambassador of *Morocco*." This sally produced an explosion of merriment, and the speaker threatened her with the displeasure of the house.

The enquiry occupied the time of parliament for seven weeks, and the secrets revealed will be regarded as among the most edifying monuments of the state of manners in England at the commencement of the 19th century. The sale of promotions by Mrs. Clarke, not only in the army but in the church, was proved undeniably. She had her known agents and her fixed scale of prices. Candidates for advancement in the army and the church duly sent in to her their titles and testimonials. An aspirant to the mitre placed in her hands the recommendation of an archbishop, and obtained, through her influence over the duke of York, "the honour of preaching before royalty", at Weymouth. "This gentleman," said one of the London newspapers, describing the effect of the sermon, "certainly possesses that sweet charm, that celestial unction, which Christian oratory demands. He inveighed with peculiar energy against the savage philosophy of the French deists. *His lips are touched with the live coal*

from the altar. The king was very attentive, and stood the whole time; the queen and princesses were melted into tears." Unfortunately George III. had a dislike to the Irish O' in the preacher's name, and Mrs. Clarke failed to make him a bishop.

The second, or rather the only question, was the duke of York's cognisance of the practices of his mistress. He solemnly protested his innocence "on the honour of a prince," in a letter to the speaker. This letter was considered extremely ill advised. Mrs. Clarke, it is true, was the only witness who bore direct testimony to his participation in her transactions; and her unsupported evidence should carry little weight. Her narrative, however, was for the most part not only consistent and clear, but countenanced by the duke's letters; and the slight inconsistencies in her evidence did not amount to prevarication. If the duke of York did not perceive the game played by Mrs. Clarke, and the use which she made of him, he must have been the weakest of mankind. The four principal motions against him were supported by minorities of 199, 123, 196, and 112. These divisions, comprising many of the most independent and honourable members of the house, conflicted very awkwardly with his solemn asseveration "on the honour of a prince." Whilst the last motion, which would have disqualified him for life was still pending, he resigned, and the enquiry terminated.

Some were too indulgent to the conduct and sensualities of the duke of York: they seemed to treat as sacred the frailties of a prince. But, at the same time, the outcry against him partook not a little of

what a living wit and poet has happily termed "the cant-whoop." Supposing him innocent of participation or connivance, he still proved his unworthiness of public trust, by admitting his mistress to interfere at all with his relations and duties as a public servant; and he compromised his character as an individual, by withdrawing from her, when his infatuation gave way to disgust, a paltry annuity to which he had pledged "the honour of a prince."

Lord Moira, Sheridan, and the few other personal friends who still adhered to the prince of Wales, supported the duke of York in the enquiry. Two of the duke's letters to Mrs. Clarke came out in evidence. They covered him with suspicion and ridicule. One related to her clerical protegé, for whom she obtained the honour of preaching before royalty; the other, to a general officer, who wanted a regiment;—and both were foolish effusions of maudlin endearment. She threatened to publish her memoirs, with the duke's letters, 90 in number, still in her possession, and had, or pretended to have, 18,000 copies ready for publication; but she gave them up, it was understood, for a consideration, to lord Moira, who negotiated on the occasion at the express instance of the prince of Wales.

The name of the princess of Wales came once more before the public in the course of this year. She was importuned by her creditors, and unable to pay them. From confidence in her political friends, who now constituted the government, or from her own imprudence, she exceeded her income, and found herself 49,000*l.* in debt. With an income of 22,000*l.* a year, and a grant of 34,000*l.*

out of the droits of the admiralty, her embarrassments were inexcusable, and her friend Mr. Perceval, chancellor of the exchequer, refused any application to the House of Commons. The prince of Wales voluntarily came forward in a manner highly honourable to him. His own distresses had augmented, not decreased; and, considering the income of the princess and their separation, he was morally as well as legally exempt from liability. He, however, directed Mr. Adam, his chancellor of the duchy of Cornwall, to attend a meeting of the creditors of the princess, and state to them that the prince,—himself embarrassed and restricted in income,—yet undertook the payment of the sum of 49,000*l.*, upon condition that he should be no longer looked to for payment, and that the tradesmen of the princess, like his own, should be obliged to send in their claims within a given time.

The movements and fortunes of armies on the continent soon diverted and engaged the whole mind of the nation. The military efforts of the British government, were, this year, the greatest that had been made since the commencement of the revolutionary war, and the most disastrous. Napoleon and Alexander, during their conference at Erfurth, had addressed a joint letter to George III., conveying an offer of peace. Mr. Canning, in a reply to the Russian minister, declared the king's readiness to negotiate in concert with his allies, among whom he expressly named the supreme junta of Spain, acting in the name of Ferdinand VII. The emperor Alexander treated the Spanish people as insurgents armed against Joseph

Bonaparte, their lawful king; and the French minister, Talleyrand, pithily asked, "What would the English government say, if it were proposed to them to admit (as parties to a negotiation) the insurgent catholics of Ireland?" A negotiation thus inauspiciously begun was abruptly, but not unexpectedly, terminated.

The British government, by a coalition with Austria, called off Napoleon, in the beginning of 1809, from the Ebro to the Danube. His absence was soon felt in Spain. King Joseph, an unambitious, benevolent voluptuary, of cultivated mind, devoted to literature, society, and the sex, and reluctantly transferred from the humbler throne and more genial clime of Naples to the proud empire of Spain and the Indies, thought only of court pageantries and pleasure at Madrid, when he should have been with the French troops in the camp. The French marshals were divided by personal enmity or envious rivalry. The Spaniards took heart once more, and rallied their scattered forces from the mountains. Sir Arthur Wellesley arrived with a reinforcement to rescue Portugal and the British army from Soult, who had crossed the frontier, and taken Oporto by storm. On the 22d of April, 1809, sir Arthur Wellesley landed at Lisbon; took the command in chief of the British troops; was received enthusiastically, and appointed marshal-general of the Portuguese army, by the acting government of Portugal; formed his plans; advanced upon Oporto by Coimbra; encountered and drove back the French light cavalry on the 10th; and pushed two detachments, under lord Paget and general George Murray,

across the Douro at two different points, with admirable rapidity and secrecy, on the night of the 11th of May. Marshal Beresford, with a Portuguese force, marched at the same time by another route to cut off Soult's retreat upon Amarante.

Soult's precipitate evacuation of Oporto was made with sacrifices both of his reputation and resources. It would appear as if he had for a moment forgotten his duty and the enemy, absorbed wholly by his own personal ambition and intrigues. The partition treaty of Fontainbleau provided that Oporto, with the province between the Douro and Minho, should be erected into a separate independent state. Soult summoned to his presence the persons of most influence in the province, suggested to them that they should solicit from Napoleon the execution of this project, and used every art to conciliate the people. Napoleon had already provided for his family; and it occurred to Soult, that the sovereignty of this new state might be bestowed upon the marshal who made the conquest of the kingdom. Soult was unconscious not only of the approach of sir Arthur Wellesley, but of the existence of a still more dangerous foe in the bosom of his own army. That metaphysico-republican illuminism, which had pervaded and survived the French revolution, was preserved and propagated by secret oaths, signs, and symbols, through the armies of Napoleon, and threatened his political despotism more than once.*

* It spread rapidly, and exploded through various conspiracies, on the restoration of the Bourbons in France; communicated itself in the general contact of armies and nations

The "initiated" among the French military at this period were doubly disgusted with the irregular and harassing warfare in Spain, and a cause which violently jarred with their sworn principles. News from Germany represented Napoleon as running headlong upon destruction, and his ruin as nearly accomplished already by the battle of Esling. It was resolved to surprise and depose Soult, and raise the republican standard in Portugal. Conferences were even secretly held at the British head-quarters, through a staff officer, named D'Argenton. But some superior officers, putting on a mask of justifiable artifice or perfidious infamy, detected, and Soult by his energy defeated, their designs. Four of the conspirators were placed under arrest by the marshal, and sent off prisoners to Paris. They retorted the charge of military treason upon him, and an impenetrable veil was thrown over the accusation and the criminals. D'Argenton alone was executed.

Soult's retreat to the frontier of Gallicia, pursued by sir Arthur Wellesley, and sir John Moore's retreat to Corunna, pursued by Napoleon and Soult himself, were equally disastrous to the respective armies, and creditable to the skill and courage of the chiefs. Arrived at Montelegre, sir Arthur Wellesley gave up the pursuit, and wheeled round upon the Tagus, resolved to enter Spain at another point, and

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at the general peace; even among the officers of the Russian army, and disturbed the latter days of the emperor Alexander; produced the constitutional movements of 1820, and the revolutions of 1830; exists still, and will continue to exist, "*active and unquenchable as the Greek fire.*"

make a rapid movement upon Madrid. With the experience of sir John Moore before him, he still reckoned on the efficient co-operation of a Spanish army; concentrated his forces on the frontier at Salvatierra; concerted his intended movements with the Spanish junta; crossed into Estramadura, and joined the Spanish general, Cuesta, at Oropeza, on the 20th of July. Sir Arthur Wellesley failed to obtain from the Spanish authorities the command in chief of both armies in Spain, and found Cuesta an impracticable and incapable old man. But he still persisted in his design of anticipating the concentration of the French armies by the rapidity of his movements, and marched upon the Alberche.

King Joseph, thus threatened, hastened, like another Sardanapalus, to meet the enemy, with marshal Jourdan for his major-general, or military Mentor; joined his force with the corps of Victor and Sebastiani on the 25th, took the offensive, crossed the Guadarama on the 26th, and confronted sir Arthur Wellesley in his fine position at Talavera on the 27th of July. It was near nightfall when the French cannonade began. Marshal Victor attempted to carry a hill which formed the key of the British position on the left. He made his attack with an inadequate force, and was easily repulsed. The firing ceased, and both armies prepared for the next day's battle. Jourdan, during the night, advised king Joseph to avoid a decisive engagement, and confine himself to "the war of chicanery*," until Soult should come with the corps of Mortier and Ney on the British rear. Victor, a mere *sa-*

* Victoires, Conquêtes, et Revers, &c..

preur, who supplied the want of head by courage and impetuosity, undertook to dislodge the British. Joseph, with the fear of his brother Napoleon before his eyes, and with the spurious energy of a mind conscious of its weakness, decided for the bolder counsel. At sunrise, accordingly, the cannonade began, and continued till mid-day, when the heat compelled the assailants to suspend the combat. Men of both armies, during this pause, slaked their thirst at opposite sides of the same brook, and shook hands across it, in congratulation of their mutual valour.* After a lapse of three hours, and some manœuvring of corps on both sides, the French renewed the battle, again directing their chief efforts against the British left, until nightfall, when they abandoned the attack as hopeless. The loss on both sides was severe; that of the British exceeding 5000, that of the French 7000 men.

The French and others have denied that the result of this battle can be called a British victory; both armies still occupying each its own ground. It should, perhaps, be termed a repulse. Sir Arthur Wellesley had in his favour the errors of Victor, and superior numbers. But it is admitted that he chose the ground before, and directed the movements during the battle, with great sagacity and sang-froid. The French had disappeared on the morning of the 29th. Sir Arthur Wellesley did not attempt pursuit; remained in his position at Talavera until the 2d of August; learned suddenly that Soult was advancing upon his communications with Portugal;

* See lord Castlereagh's speech on moving the thanks of the House of Commons to sir Arthur Wellesley and the army.

became sensible of the rashness of his expedition and the dangers of his situation; made a precipitate retreat from Talavera, recommending to the generosity of the enemy * his abandoned sick and wounded, and leaving the Spaniards in his rear to be routed at Arzobispo; reached Portugal by the union of fortunate casualties and rapid marches; and was created Viscount Wellington of Talavera.

The marquess Wellesley superseded Mr. Frere as British envoy extraordinary in Spain only two days after the battle of Talavera. Had he arrived earlier, the result might have been different. His talents and authority with the junta might have obtained for his brother the command in chief of the Spanish as well as of the British and Portuguese armies, and by thus giving unity and efficiency to the co-operation of the Spaniards, rendered his bold movement upon Madrid successful.

The British ministry attempted two other more direct diversions in favour of Austria and the coalition. Both failed. The first was a descent, under sir John Stuart, from Sicily, upon the kingdom of Naples. Murat, now king Joachim of Naples, had ample notice, during the four months' preparation of the Sicilian expedition, and completely defeated every attempt to obtain a footing or stir up insurrection in his kingdom. Bands of robbers and other ruffians were thrown upon the coast, and, under the pretext of war, committed such atrocities that the English general and admiral thought it necessary to disavow them. Those officers would have

* Victor acted with great humanity to the British sick and wounded.

better consulted the national honour, if they never contaminated the British flag by the transport of such miscreants.

The second attempt is condemned to a mournful perpetuity of remembrance. The Walcheren expedition, like the Neapolitan, was so long in preparation, that it came too late. Some days before it sailed, intelligence arrived of the victory of Wagram, which placed Austria once more at the feet of Napoleon. It is necessary to recapitulate briefly the chief incidents of this coalition.

Austria commenced the campaign in the month of April, 1809, with 550,000 men, under the orders of the archduke Charles as generalissimo. Napoleon could oppose to him only 180,000 men, including the contingents of the confederation of the Rhine. On the 12th of April news of the commencement of hostilities reached Paris by telegraph. Napoleon instantly set out from the French capital, reached the Danube on the 16th, gained the battle of Echmuhl on the 22d, took Ratisbon, and received his first wound — a contusion of the right foot from a spent musket ball — on the 23d. He was seated at the moment on a bank, conversing with Duroc. "That shot," said he, "must have come from a Tyrolese; those fellows are clever marksmen." On the 11th and 12th of May, Napoleon, with professed and probably sincere reluctance, bombarded the defenceless city of Vienna. A flag of truce was sent to inform him that the archduchess Maria Louisa, then seized with the small-pox, and unable to share the flight of the court, was exposed in the imperial palace to the fire of his artillery; and he

changed the direction of his batteries from the palace and its environs, out of regard to her who was soon to share his throne. The town capitulated, and was occupied by the French on the 13th. The archduke, at the head of 90,000 Austrians, attacked 35,000 French in a strong position, and commanded by Napoleon, on the 21st. This attack was fierce and murderous, yet only the prelude to the battle of Esling, fought next day. On the 22d, before day-light, at four in the morning, the archduke renewed his attack. It may be said there were three powers engaged in the dreadful strife, — the Austrians, the French, and the Danube. The river swept away several times the bridges constructed by the French, — playing with the passions and designs of both parties, by the terrible caprice with which it rose and fell. Both sides claimed the victory in this day's carnage; but the advantage was decidedly the archduke's. From the 22d of June to the 6th of July both armies were considerably reinforced. At sunrise on the 6th a fierce cannonade commenced on both sides, and ended in Napoleon's obtaining the decisive victory of Wagram. The archduke retreated with his scattered army upon Moravia, leaving behind him 40 pieces of cannon, 17,000 prisoners, 9000 wounded, and 4000 dead on the field.*

* Whilst Napoleon, at one moment, stood mournfully observing the wounded, who were carried to the rear, he observed twelve old grenadiers, covered with dust, gunpowder, and blood, bearing a wounded man upon a litter formed of their muskets with some green oak branches. It was marshal Lannes, duke of Montebello, mortally wounded and faint with the loss of blood. Napoleon approached, stopped the

The news of this battle, and of the armistice which succeeded it, had reached England before the sailing of the expedition to the Scheldt. A wise minister would have abandoned the armament, or given to it another destination. But it was the most powerful and the proudest yet prepared to be launched from the shores of England; it consisted of 39 sail of the line and 36 frigates, with countless small craft, carrying 100,000 brave men, of whom 40,000 were soldiers, the rest marines and sailors; and lord Castlereagh, who planned it, hoped that it would not only retrieve his character, but immortalise his administration. He went with a large assemblage of his friends to witness and rejoice in the truly magnificent spectacle of the sailing of the fleet from the Downs. How frail and false are hopes and wishes! Whilst these gallant men were going forth in anticipated triumph, the angel of death was near. The incapacity of the minister and of their leader devoted them as victims, not to the carnage of war, which is gilded over by the sentiments of courage, honour, and duty, but to pestilent disease.

Lord Chatham obtained the command in chief of the military force. The public was surprised at the appointment of a man at once infirm, indolent, and incapable. But it was proclaimed that his

grenadiers, and asked, with choking utterance, several times, "Lannes, my friend, dost thou not know me? It is the emperor, — it is Bonaparte, — it is thy friend." The dying warrior opened his eyes, and could not speak; but raised his languid arms to Napoleon, who held him some moments in his embrace, with tears and sobbing. — *Vict. Conq. Savary.*

brother, Mr. Pitt, knew the secret of his talent. Lord Liverpool had snatched from him, at his brother's death, the succession to the sinecure of the cinque ports; he was without fortune; the income arising from the appointment would be a personal convenience to him, and the favour of queen Charlotte removed all objection. Lord Chatham occupied the islands of Walcheren and South Beveland, and invested Flushing on the 1st of August. The resistance of the French and Dutch was not only feeble, but, in some instances, dastardly. It seemed a bungling game, played with equal ignorance and stupidity on both sides. Flushing was wretchedly defended; but such was the want of skill and vigour in conducting the siege, that it did not surrender until the 15th. In the mean time the French fleet got up under cover of Antwerp. Bernadotte arrived, and put the place in a state of defence; and both Antwerp and the fleet, the chief objects of the expedition, were thus completely secured.

Lord Chatham should now have immediately returned, or the ministers should have recalled him. But the evil star of both and of the army prevailed. The British troops were attacked with an endemic fever, of which the ravages gradually and dreadfully increased. The sick were, on the 22d of August, 1500; on the 26th, 3000; on the 28th, 4000; and on the 8th of September, 11,000! The dead were buried at night;—a precaution adopted hitherto only in the plague, to shroud the frightful spectacle of disease and mortality from the eyes of the living. Lord Chatham returned with part of his force on the 14th of September, and the pestilential island of

Walcheren was, after some hesitation, wholly abandoned on the 23d of December. Such was the disastrous and disgraceful end of this fatal expedition.

The ministry, distracted and feeble from its first hour, was now convulsed. Two cabinet ministers decided their quarrel by a duel. The friends of lord Castlereagh commenced the dispute by anonymous paragraphs, imputing to Mr. Canning that he had intrigued for the removal of his colleague. Lord Castlereagh himself, in a letter to Mr. Canning, charged him with having obtained secretly, from the duke of Portland, a promise that his lordship should be removed from his office as incompetent, and having yet continued to sit with him in the cabinet. The letter of lord Castlereagh set forth the case at some length, and concluded with a demand of personal satisfaction. Mr. Canning, in reply, waved discussion, and accepted the challenge. They met on the 20th of September, at five in the morning, on Putney Heath. The first discharge took no effect. They fired a second time; and Mr. Canning seemed prepared for a third fire, when lord Castlereagh said, with the dulcet monotony of his parliamentary speeches, "I believe the right honourable gentleman is wounded." Mr. Canning's blood was flowing at the moment, but not dangerously, and they left the ground.

Statements and counter-statements of the cause of quarrel followed the duel. The *gravamen* urged on behalf of lord Castlereagh was the concealment from him of the steps taken by Mr. Canning to cause his removal from the war department. The facts of the case are few, simple, and conclusive. Mr. Can-

ning, during the Easter recess, placed before the duke of Portland the alternative of his own resignation or the removal of lord Castlereagh from the war department; and caused his representation to be made known to lord Camden, with the intention of its being communicated to the minister who was its object. Lord Camden, it should be observed, was lord Castlereagh's near relative, and nearest friend. Between the duke of Portland's timid imbecility and lord Camden's anxiety "to consult lord Castlereagh's feelings," the communication was postponed by them "until lord Castlereagh should be prepared for it by his friends." Mr. Canning, so far from acquiescing in this concealment, remonstrated against it; tendered his resignation, both to the prime minister and the king, six times from April to September; and continued in office only at the express request of the friends of lord Castlereagh, who proposed several arrangements, in order to reconcile his feelings to the change. Lord Castlereagh, therefore, should have held his own zealous or officious friends, and not Mr. Canning, responsible for the concealment. But, consulting only his wounded pride, personal spirit, and mortified ambition, he challenged Mr. Canning, not for having concealed the transaction, but for having pronounced him an incompetent war minister. Such were the advantages which borough oligarchy possessed at this period over talents, that the public was besotted for a time into the belief of Mr. Canning's having intrigued against lord Castlereagh.

Mr. Canning had proposed to the duke of Portland, not only the removal of lord Castlereagh, but

the appointment of one of the most accomplished persons of his age, in whom a certain reputation for frivolities has neutralised the views, the energy, and the eloquence of a true statesman—lord Wellesley. The two ministers had resigned before their duel; the duke of Portland retired at the same time, and died shortly after. In this state the administration maintained for some time a struggling and mutilated existence, deprived, it was said, both of its head and arms. The first step was the appointment of Mr. Perceval as prime minister, in the room of the duke of Portland. He immediately addressed a letter, in duplicate, to lords Grey and Grenville, stating that "his majesty had authorised lord Liverpool, in conjunction with himself, to communicate, with their lordships, for the purpose of forming an extended and combined administration. I hope, therefore," continued Mr. Perceval in his duplicate letter, "your lordship will come to town, in order that as little time as possible may be lost in forwarding this important object." Lord Grey was in Northumberland, and lord Grenville in Cornwall. The former rejected the proposed coalition at once; and, regarding the invitation to town as proceeding from the minister, not from the king, declined it. Lord Grenville, understanding the same communication in the sense of a command from the king, came up to London, had an interview with Mr. Perceval and lord Liverpool, rejected the overture, and communicated his rejection to the leading members of the late administration then in town, and to the prince of Wales. Lord Wellesley, who had just returned from Spain, was, after some time, appointed

the successor of Mr. Canning, as foreign secretary; lord Liverpool succeeded lord Castlereagh in the department of war and colonies; and Mr. Ryder was appointed to the home department.

The king's entrance upon the fiftieth year of his reign was celebrated on the anniversary of his accession, throughout the British dominions, by what was called a jubilee. This ill-timed farce originated in the city of London, with the late well-known alderman, sir William Curtis. It was opposed in the city, and disapproved throughout the kingdom, by persons who regarded it as a manœuvre to divert public attention from the conduct and character of the administration, and as an outrage to the reason and feelings of the country, at a moment when the king's counsels and the Walcheren expedition had added twenty millions to the national debt, and covered so many families with mourning.

The session of parliament was opened by commission on the 23d of January, 1810. Amendments, condemning the ministerial direction of the war, and especially the expedition to Walcheren, were moved in both houses, and rejected by majorities of 144 to 92 in the house of peers, of 263 to 167 in the house of commons. On the 26th of January, lord Porchester moved an enquiry into the policy and conduct of the late expedition to the Scheldt. The nation was so indignant, and the folly and misconduct both of the ministers and the commander so flagrant, that an enquiry was ordered by a decried house of commons, in spite of ministers. On a division, the numbers were 195 to 186. The investigation by a committee of the whole house

occupied a considerable portion of the session. Lord Chatham's ignorant, confused, and dilatory operations before Flushing were proved to have been the immediate cause of failure.

The house and the country read with amazement the following passage in a despatch addressed to him by lord Castlereagh: "His majesty rejoices that this serious obstacle to the vigorous prosecution of the ulterior objects of the expedition has thus been *seasonably* overcome; and his majesty feels persuaded that those important objects will be followed up with the same *energy*, *perseverance*, and *rapidity*, which have hitherto distinguished your lordship's operations!" Among the papers was a "narrative of his operations," placed by lord Chatham in the hands of the king. This communication, made without the knowledge of any of the ministers, and reflecting on the conduct of sir Richard Strachan, was severely censured as clandestine and unconstitutional.*

Mr. Yorke enforced the standing order for the exclusion of strangers during the enquiry. The minutes of the evidence, however, were published every third day, and were copied at full length into the Moniteur. Napoleon availed himself of a

* Sir Richard Strachan addressed a narrative of the naval part of the expedition to the first lord of the admiralty, and completely vindicated himself. The relative positions and mutual accusations of the two commanders were happily expressed at the time, in the following *jeu d'esprit*: —

"The Earl of Chatham, with his sword drawn,
Was waiting for Sir Richard Strachan;
Sir Richard, eager to be at 'em,
Was waiting for the Earl of Chatham."

precious opportunity to blazon forth the disastrous incapacity of the British ministry, and the shame of the British arms. Upon the close of the enquiry, lord Porchester moved a series of resolutions of censure on the ministers. Each proposition was a logical consequence from the facts in evidence: but the house thought it had done enough by admitting proof of culpability, and screened the culprits.

The exclusion of strangers during the enquiry led to a degrading squabble between the house of commons and the manager of a debating club, and to a more serious contest with one of its own members. The manager proposed as a subject of debate the enforcement of its standing order by the house; placarded the walls with announcements of it; was brought in custody to the bar; committed to Newgate for a breach of privilege; and, from being one of the most insignificant of mortals, was suddenly raised to importance and notoriety. Sir Francis Burdett conceived that the personal liberty of a British subject had been violated in the person of this individual; addressed to his constituents, on the subject, a letter, in which he denied to the commons' house of parliament the power of imprisoning without trial, and designated the existing house of commons as "a part of our fellow-subjects, collected together by means which it is not necessary for me to describe." His letter was voted a libel on the house; and he was committed, under the speaker's warrant, and with a strong military escort, to the Tower. The soldiers, attacked by the multitude, fired upon their assailants. Several persons were wounded, and some lives lost. The metropolis

was dreadfully agitated for some days. A military force was found necessary to clear the streets; shots were exchanged between the soldiers and the assembled populace; and several obnoxious persons had the windows of their houses broken. Tumultuary mobs, public meetings, inflammatory resolutions and addresses, continued to produce agitation and alarm for some time in the metropolis and great towns.

The prorogation of parliament, and consequent liberation of sir Francis Burdett, were fixed for the 21st of June. On that day vast multitudes were assembled, and organised in different bodies, with banners, music, and a regular order of procession, to escort "the martyr of liberty" from the Tower to his house. He left the Tower privately by water, and thereby grievously disappointed and offended the mighty host of his friends.

The king's final illness, and the necessity at last of a regent of the kingdom, caused the re-assembling of parliament before the end of the year.

CHAP. XVI.

1810, 1811.

REGENCY. — MINISTRY CONTINUED. — CAMPAIGN IN PORTUGAL. — RETREAT OF MASSENA.

THE last and long-enduring illness of George III. began in the autumn of 1810. It was referred to several proximate causes, both public and domestic. The arbitrary construction of its own privileges asserted by the house of commons in a contest with an insignificant person, whom oppression invested with momentary importance, and a still more perilous trial of strength with one of the most independent and popular of its own members, had produced agitation throughout the kingdom, and tumult with the loss of lives in the metropolis. It was natural to suppose that such a state of public affairs should disturb a mind already shaken by age and malady. At the same time, the king's fifth son, Ernest duke of Cumberland, had a strange adventure, involving circumstances of assassination and suicide, enveloped in mysterious horror then, and to this hour, and well calculated to shock a father. The cause, however, mainly and most commonly assigned for the king's loss of reason was the afflicting illness of the princess Amelia, his youngest, and, it was said, his favourite daughter.

The public willingly adopted the belief that the king's faculties gave way to his parental feelings. A particular incident was mentioned as having more immediately produced this melancholy effect. The princess, who resided during her illness at Windsor, was visited by him every day. Supposing at one moment, on or about the 20th of October, that her death was near, she commanded a jeweller to prepare, after her directions, a mourning ring, and bring it before three o'clock the next day. This was the hour at which she was daily visited by her father. He came at three, and held out his hand as usual to the princess, who put the ring on his finger without uttering a word. It contained a lock of her hair, and bore the inscription "Remember me when I am gone." The father, it was said, never recovered the shock given to his feelings by this scene: on the 25th of October he was pronounced in a state of manifest derangement. The princess lived to the 2d of November.

This incident was much talked of, and studiously circulated. A master in chancery* made it the subject of a pathetic episode in the house of commons, and was so overpowered by his own eloquence that he burst into tears. There can be no doubt that the circumstances and the effect were exaggerated, if not invented. The supposed inscription on the ring was really affecting; but it should be remembered, that at this time the king's sight was nearly, if not wholly gone; that the princess had been for years suffering incurable disease; that her father never knew either the human passions or human affections in their force, and that sensibility does

* Mr. Stephen.

not increase with age. It required but the slightest incident, or no extrinsic incident whatever, to bring on a malady, the frequent visitations of which had already rendered his tenure of reason and his faculties so frail. But the system of giving a false colour to his character, and a false interest to his life through his reign, was successfully pursued to the last.

The houses of parliament assembled on the 1st of November. Communications were made to them by the lord chancellor, and chancellor of the exchequer, respecting the state of the king. Committees were appointed to examine the attendant physicians, and successive adjournments took place with the hope, or the decorous pretence of a hope, that the king's sanity would be speedily restored. On the 20th of December, Mr. Perceval commenced proceedings for the appointment of a regent. Taking for his guide the precedent of 1788–9, he proposed three resolutions, copied from those of Mr. Pitt. The first, setting forth the king's incapacity, was unanimously agreed to; the second, declaring the competency of the two houses to supply the deficiency of the executive power, was carried with the single dissentient voice of sir Francis Burdett; on the third, which proposed to proceed by bill, an amendment was moved by Mr. Ponsonby, then leader of the opposition in the house of commons, to the effect, that the proceeding should be by address. The amendment was rejected, and the original resolution carried, by a majority of 269 to 157. Similar resolutions were moved in the house of lords, and carried by a majority of 100 to 74.

It is unnecessary to follow the course of the debates. The questions of 1788–9 were but repeated, whether the proceeding should be by bill or by address; whether the regent should or should not be restricted in his exercise of the executive power; and the arguments on both sides * were but reproduced. The divisions, however, in the course of the proceedings underwent extraordinary fluctuations, according to the reports of the king's health, and the chances of his recovery. Eventually, the restrictions of 1788–9 were carried, and the prince under those circumstances again consented to accept the regency.

The chief, if not the sole, novelty in the debate was, that lord Grey charged the lord chancellor (Eldon) with a crime little short of treason, in having set the great seal, in 1801 and 1804, to commissions for giving the royal assent to several bills, whilst the king was in a state of mental infirmity, under medical care, and subject to personal control. Lord King moved, on this ground, that lord Eldon's name should be expunged from the list of the queen's council. Lord Eldon quoted Latin, shed tears, complained that he had been selected for attack, and vindicated himself by having acted in concert with his colleagues, under the advice of the physicians, who pronounced the king at the particular moments in a lucid and competent state. The motion was negatived by a majority of 189 to 64; but lord Eldon has not yet forgotten the accusation, or forgiven the mover. A strong protest against this division was entered by lords Grey,

* The only difference was, that in this instance the question of the prince's *right* to the regency was sunk by mutual agreement. The one party did not assert, and the other did not dispute it.

Lauderdale, Holland, Erskine, Rosslyn, Derby, Ashburton, and Ponsonby. It is seldom that undeniable facts have been so utterly disregarded and walked over by ministerial numbers in either house of parliament. A sentence or two from the protest will give an idea of the case: — "Dissentient, secondly, Because it appears by the evidence of Dr. Heberden, taken on oath before a committee of this house, 'that he was first called in to attend upon his majesty on the 12th of February, in 1804; that he believed his majesty presided at a council on the 23d of April following; that he considered the interval between those periods as constituting the duration of his majesty's disease at that time.' Yet, nevertheless, it appears from the journals of this house, that between the two days above mentioned, John lord Eldon, being then lord high chancellor, &c. did on the 5th of March receive, and in his majesty's name signify his majesty's assent to a bill entitled 'An Act to enable his majesty to grant the inheritance in fee simple of certain manors, &c. to his royal highness Frederick duke of York and Albany;' and that he did also put the great seal to a commission dated the 9th of March, by virtue of which fifteen bills received the royal assent, as well as to a commission dated March the 23d, under which seventeen other bills received the royal assent; although his majesty was at that time, as appears by the evidence above recited, afflicted by a malady of the same nature and character with that which has now occasioned a suspension of the royal functions. Fourthly, because John lord Eldon, having so conducted himself, is not, in our judgment,

a person to whom the sacred trust of acting as one of her majesty's council, in the care of his majesty's person, &c. can with propriety or safety be committed." It should not be forgotten that the regency act authorised the queen's council to decide upon the king's competency to resume the executive power.

Mr. Whitbread subsequently brought this important subject before the house of commons, and moved for an enquiry, but without success. Very unequivocal expressions, however, were applied. The chancellor's conduct was described by sir Francis Burdett as a high crime and misdemeanour, — "unless the king was a mere puppet, to be brought down to parliament occasionally in a gilt coach." Lord Eldon and his colleagues, however, hazarded this indiscreet and dangerous use of the great seal for the convenience of the public service, without any secret or improper motives.

On Tuesday the 4th of February, 1811, the prince of Wales went through the ceremonial of his installation as regent. The formation of a new cabinet was expected to be his first exercise of power. His conduct and language had encouraged this expectation. The princes of the blood had been assembled by him, and had signed in his presence a protest against the restrictions communicated to him by Mr. Perceval as intended to be proposed. He refused to see Mr. Perceval at Carlton House. In accepting the regency, he declared that his opinions of 1788–9 remained unchanged. The public learned with astonishment that, after the installation, Mr. Perceval kissed hands as prime minister, and

that the administration was to be continued. This was thought the more extraordinary that lords Grey and Grenville were known to have been in communication with the prince, and that a new cabinet was supposed to have been already constituted.

The prince's letter to Mr. Perceval, acquainting him that he and his colleagues were still to continue ministers, was made public, and put an end to surmises as to the motives of the prince. It professed to convey them in the following passage: "The prince feels it incumbent on him, at this precise juncture, to communicate to Mr. Perceval his intention not to remove from their stations those whom he finds there as his majesty's official servants. At the same time the prince owes it to truth, and to the sincerity of character which he trusts will appear in every action of his life, in whatever situation placed, explicitly to declare that the irresistible impulse of filial duty and affection to his beloved and afflicted father leads him to dread that any act of the regent might in the smallest degree have the effect of interfering with the progress of his recovery. This consideration alone dictates the decision now communicated to Mr. Perceval."

The regent's letter was a false light. His decision was the result of his indolence, his personal dislike of lords Grey and Grenville, especially of the former, and an intriguing manœuvre practised by Sheridan. The prince, now in his forty-ninth year, had lost, in the idleness of a frivolous and sensual life, all energy and impulse of action or motive; he dreaded the unbending principles and character of lord Grey, and was disposed to pronounce against

him the same sentence of exclusion which his father had pronounced against Mr. Fox; he calculated upon less trouble and more complaisance from Mr. Perceval and his colleagues, who had little of personal or public character to compromise, and were more versed in the routine of administration; and Sheridan, who divined his wishes with the unerring instinct of a court slave, contrived to gratify them.

Sheridan, independently of his love of intrigue, and the grovelling infatuation with which he devoted himself to the prince of Wales, had personal motives. He had long been a disappointed Whig partisan. The duke of Portland would not hear of his admission to the cabinet, when his talents were in full vigour, his name not yet vulgarised, and his pretensions favoured by Mr. Fox. From lord Grenville he had nothing to hope, and even every thing to fear. He had squibbed and intrigued against the junction of that nobleman and Mr. Fox. His necessities obliged him to accept the contemptuous liberality with which lord Grenville consented to his being treasurer of the navy in 1806; and he finally lost the confidence of Mr. Fox and lord Grey. An opportunity now offered itself for gratifying at once his ambition, vanity, and revenge.

Both houses having passed the regency bill, the prince of Wales desired lord Grenville to prepare, in conjunction with lord Grey, the answer which he should make to the addresses of the lords and commons. Those noblemen, accordingly, drew up an answer, and transmitted it, through Mr. Adam, to the prince. He disapproved of it, and sent to them,

by Messrs. Adam and Sheridan, for their approbation, a counter draft, chiefly written by Sheridan, which they declined sanctioning, but which, with some further modification, was eventually spoken by the prince. The supposition was natural to any one, and unavoidable to those who knew Sheridan, that the objections to the draft of lords Grey and Grenville were suggested by him. Accordingly those noblemen addressed to the prince a joint representation, stating in substance as follows, "that when his royal highness did lord Grenville the honour to command his attendance, it was distinctly expressed to him that his royal highness had condescended to select him in conjunction with lord Grey to be consulted with as the public and responsible advisers of the answer to both houses; that, on the same grounds of public and responsible advice, lord Grey, honoured in like manner, applied himself to the consideration of it conjointly with lord Grenville; that the draft which they humbly submitted was considered by them as open to every remark which might occur to his royal highness's better judgment; but they would be wanting in sincerity and openness, if they suppressed the expression of their deep concern in finding that their humble endeavours in his royal highness's service had been submitted to the judgment of another person, by whose advice his royal highness had been guided in his final decision upon a matter on which they alone had, however unworthily, been honoured with his royal highness's commands." The prince communicated this paper to Sheridan, the "other person" obviously alluded to. "Proud," says the

author of the Life of Sheridan, "of the influence attributed to him by the noble writers, and how more than ever stimulated to make them feel its weight, he employed the whole force of his shrewdness and ridicule, in exposing the stately tone of dictation which, according to his view, was assumed throughout this paper; and in picturing to the prince the state of tutelage in which he might expect to be kept by ministers, who began thus early with their lectures." Whilst Sheridan was thus intriguing with insidious treachery at Carlton House, he addressed to lord Holland, in what he called a statement of the whole transaction, a hollow vindication of his share in it. It is impossible to read his defence without a feeling of disgust at its abortive ingenuity and diffuse hypocrisy, and of mournful regret, that wit, talent, eloquence, and an ambition once generous and proud, should be so self-debased.*

Sheridan, in his vindication, states in substance, "that he heard from either lord Moira or Mr. Adam, that the prince had desired lord Moira to sketch an outline of the answer; that it occurred to him to try at a sketch also; that he did put together a sketch of a reply, chiefly containing sentiments and expressions which he had heard from the prince himself; that he read it to the prince, without having heard lord Grenville's name even once mentioned as connected with the answer; that the prince approved his sketch, with some alterations, and then for the first time mentioned that lords Grenville and Grey had undertaken to prepare an

* See the whole statement in Moore's "Life of Sheridan."

answer; that the prince commanded him and Adam to dine alone with his royal highness next day; that he then learned, for the first time, the transmission of a formal draft to the prince by lords Grenville and Grey; that he requested the prince would not refer to him the paper of the noble lords, and asked the prince's permission to throw his own sketch into the fire; that the prince would not hear of either; that the address of lords Grey and Grenville was disapproved by the prince, who wrote strong marginal comments on each paragraph; that the time pressed, and his (Sheridan's) sketch was, with some further modifications in deference to the feelings of lords Grey and Grenville, finally adopted.

It is one of the tritest of all common-places, that truth is seldom heard within the doors of a palace. To lay bare this intrigue completely, would require an examination of comparative veracity, demanding in the performance great art, without rewarding the labour of dissection. A nobleman, whose truth and honour are not only known but proverbial, was shown at this period by Sheridan two "sketches" of an answer, one of which he said was the prince's, the other his own, upon which the noble lord's opinion was desired by the prince. His embarrassment may be imagined, when the prince placed before him, at Carlton House, the same sketches, with this curious difference, that the prince claimed as his the draft which Sheridan had appropriated, and assigned to Sheridan the credit of the other.

Sheridan's professed ignorance of the application to lords Grenville and Grey is incredible. It could not have escaped one so much on the alert, and in

such frequent intercourse with the prince, Adam, and lord Moira. His account of "its occurring to him to try at a sketch also," as a mere amateur, and his professed opinion that he did not regard lords Grey and Grenville as constitutionally responsible advisers, are flimsy pretences. The chief question remaining is the extent to which he acted in confederacy, tacit or express. He produced in his vindication the comments ascribed to him, written on the margin of the paper in the prince's hand. But these comments may have been not the less his. Sheridan had that first art of a court favourite, to insinuate his ideas in such a manner that the weak depository of power should unconsciously adopt and mistake them for his own. He knew the character, the habits, and the weaknesses of the prince of Wales; the vision of governing as a favourite presented itself to his ambitious, vain, and disappointed mind; and he began his system precisely as lord Bute had begun his at the accession of George III., by secretly supplying the new sovereign's first address, without the knowledge of his responsible advisers.

The country was more surprised than dissatisfied by the prince's continuing the Tory ministry. It was not that the administration had any root in opinion. They were tolerated by the public with contemptuous indifference, merely because there was no powerful rival party. The Whigs had more of parliamentary influence and talent than of popular support. I should have become apparent to them, from the accession of George III. — at least from the development of his principles of government at the com-

mencement of his reign, — that their only hope of power was in the support of the nation; yet did they still look to the crown as the sole dispenser of office, and never frankly identify themselves with any great popular cause. The coalesced parties of lords Grey and Grenville joined, it is true, in an enlightened view of the great question of religious freedom. But they were in advance of opinion and the age, and their generous support and promotion of catholic liberty alienated at the same time the sovereign and the people. Hence the prince of Wales, now regent, gained rather than lost with the public by discarding the whigs, and adopting the tories.

It may be proper to state briefly the general situation of the British empire at the commencement of the regency, in 1811. The enormous pressure of taxation, from a series of long, ill-directed, expensive, and sanguinary campaigns and coalitions, was grievously felt and complained of by the people of England. The war *ad internecionem*, of orders in council on the one side, and Berlin and Milan decrees on the other, was already affecting British industry and trade from the capitalist to the lowest manufacturing labourer. An alarming derangement of the currency carried confusion and distress into all pecuniary transactions and engagements. The loss upon foreign exchanges was from 15 to 20 per cent. Gold had risen from 3*l.* 17*s.* to 4*l.* 12*s.* the ounce, in bank notes; or, in other words, bank notes, now the only currency, were depreciated, and the prices of commodities raised in that distressing proportion. The bullion committee

was appointed. Its chairman, Mr. Horner, made a report, ascribing the depreciation to excessive issues of paper currency by the bank, threatened thereby the facility of having bills discounted, created a panic, and produced several mercantile and bank failures. Whiggism and toryism were no longer rallying cries, but the public distress and discontent sometimes embodied themselves in violent accesses of zeal for parliamentary reform.

In Ireland the people were divided by the most envenomed of all instincts — religious antipathy. A dominant minority still thought themselves hereditary masters, and told the majority they were hereditary slaves. But if the former still claimed and cherished, the latter began to repudiate and scorn, the inheritance. The catholic body, now outgrowing thraldom, began to think seriously of bursting its chains; and the local vices of the social and political organisation of the community were aggravated by a system of proconsular government, at once partial, ignorant, and incapable.

The conquests and decrees of the French emperor had destroyed neutral commerce in Europe. The British orders in council, and exasperating negotiations of 1810, had deprived England of her commerce with the United States of America, the only neutral commerce or neutral nation left. But, at the same time, the maritime and colonial power of England went on increasing in the Mediterranean, in the West Indies, in North America, and beyond the Cape of Good Hope.

The state of war had now become habitual to the rising generation. Her insular position, and vic-

torious fleets, had kept off from England that decisive crisis between belligerent nations — a war of invasion. She had the advantage of sending forth her surplus population to fight her battles on a foreign soil, whilst the children of industry and peace supplied the necessities and suffered the hardships only of a foreign war. The vast empire and gigantic power of France had reached their utmost extent at the close of 1810. Napoleon had vanquished Austria and brought her into his system in 1809. Designing to render his dynasty more secure by direct succession, and by consanguinity with one of the most proud and powerful monarchies of Europe, he divorced the empress Josephine, and married the archduchess Maria Louisa of Austria. The emperor of Russia and king of Prussia still continued in his train; whilst it may be said he ruled directly that assemblage of German states, called the Confederation of the Rhine, which contained a population of 15,000,000, and furnished him 150,000 troops. With a few strokes of the pen he crowned his ten years' labour of the sword, by incorporating with the French empire, as integral parts, Rome, Holland, the Hanse Towns, the Valois: and one of his state orators proclaimed, that "at length, after a struggle of ten years, glorious to France, the most extraordinary genius yet produced by nature in her munificence, re-united and held in his victorious hand the scattered wreck of the empire of Charlemagne." The king of Sweden was dethroned, and a French marshal, elected successor to the throne, was, in effect, ruler of that kingdom. England had to oppose to Napoleon only the small island of Sicily,

the forlorn resistance of Spain, the occupation of Portugal, the dominion of the seas, and the energies of a free people.

It remains only to sketch the operations of the British and French armies, from the battle of Talavera and retreat of lord Wellington at the close of 1809, to the discomfiture and retreat of marshal Massena at the close of 1810. Lord Wellington, after the battle of Talavera, fell back rapidly upon Portugal, passed three months between Merida and Badajos, and in February, 1810, with an army about seventy-five or eighty thousand strong, British and Portuguese, occupied an extended line from Oporto to Santarem. The retreat of lord Wellington, the rout of the Spaniards in every encounter with the French, and the capture of several strong places, left Spain almost wholly in the power of the French. Napoleon ordered marshall Massena, prince of Essling, to enter Portugal, drive the British on board their ships or capture them, and complete the conquest of the Peninsula.

Massena entered on this important campaign with a force of 80,000 men, partitioned in corps under Ney, Junot, Regnier, and other distinguished generals. Finding it impossible to draw lord Wellington from his line of defence on the frontier, he ordered Ney to besiege Ciudad Rodrigo. The people, the garrison, and the governor, don Andrea Herasti, after a brave defence, capitulated with the honours of war. Lord Wellington, whose outposts were within a league or two of the besiegers, had the equivocal fortitude to abide strictly by his system, and look on, in spite of the gallantry, the

sufferings, and the hopes of the Spaniards, and the provoking taunts of the enemy. The French took possession of Ciudad Rodrigo on the 10th of July. Massena advanced upon Almeida, besieged and took it through the treachery of the Portuguese garrison *, and entered Portugal on the 15th of September. Lord Wellington at the same time was retiring upon Coimbra by the left bank of the Mondego. Massena designed to gain Coimbra by a rapid march along the right bank, whilst lord Wellington was retreating upon it by the left. But he had to wait two days the coming up of his artillery, and in the mean time lord Wellington, crossing the river, by an able and rapid manœuvre threw himself before the French, and took up a position upon the heights of Busaco. Here he opposed himself in order of battle to the French, on the 26th of September. Ney, Junot, and Regnier thought the British position impregnable †; but Massena declared that he should attack it next morning.

On the 27th, at day-break, the French made a simultaneous attack on two points, with desperate impetuosity. One division reached the summit of the ridge of mountain by an astonishing effort; but was riddled by a discharge of musketry, at close quarters, and then precipitated with the bayonet down the hill, with a momentum which produced terrific carnage and confusion. The Por-

* Marquess of Londonderry's Narrative, &c.

† Victoires, Conquêtes, &c. It is however stated, in a defence of Massena by colonel Pelet, his first aid-de-camp, that the marshall, on the contrary, was urged by those generals to make the attack.

tuguese, in this their first trial, behaved well, and the result inspired fresh confidence and courage through the whole army.

This attack was the first of a series of movements which compromised the renown of Massena. His error became still more glaring, when on the night of the 28th he turned the British left, which he might have done as easily without the previous attack. Lord Wellington, finding his left turned by the enemy, fell back upon Coimbra. The advanced guard of the French entered whilst the rear guard of the British was leaving the town on the 1st of October. Massena, to his surprise, found it deserted. The whole population had followed the train of the British army or fled to the mountains and woods. Enraged by this disappointment, or actuated by the want of food and love of pillage, the French troops sacked the abandoned houses in spite of every effort to maintain discipline and restrain them.

Leaving 2000 sick and wounded at Coimbra, without a sufficient garrison to protect them, Massena continued to advance in pursuit of lord Wellington. On the 7th, colonel Trant, an English officer in command of a large force of Portuguese militia, appeared before Coimbra. The French garrison of 600 men rallied round the hospital and made a desperate resistance. They were supported by such of the sick and wounded as could use their muskets and crawl to the windows, at which they appeared more like spectres than men. Finding resistance vain, they surrendered to colonel Trant as prisoners of war, on his assurance to protect them from assassination by the Portuguese. That

officer did escort them to Oporto, but several prisoners were murdered on the way; and he is charged by the French with the infamy of having exhibited the French prisoners, a wretched spectacle, to the public gaze and national hatred of the people of Oporto.

The face of the country presented to Massena as he advanced a still more disheartening sight. He had crossed the frontier with only a few days' provisions, trusting for subsistence, according to the French maxim, to the seat of war. All before him and around him now appeared solitude and devastation. The inhabitants had fled, carrying with them what they could, and destroying what they could not remove. This was not a sacrifice of voluntary patriotism. Lord Wellington had issued, on the preceding 4th of August, the severest military order in the annals of modern war. He commanded the Portuguese population, on pain of death, to desert their homes, and remove or destroy all that could be useful to an army on the approach of the French. This edict has been branded with the epithet barbarous. There is, perhaps, but one other country of Europe in which even a native general could venture upon so terrible a measure of military policy — the country of Rostopchin. But the same impassive and useful temperament which enabled lord Wellington to look on during the siege of Ciudad Rodrigo, steeled his heart against the cries of the Portuguese, and the opinion of Europe. Yet this measure was not without its inconveniences. The miscellaneous horror of the spectacle presented by the fugitive Portuguese in the train of

the British army, — mothers, daughters, infants, the young, the old, the infirm, dragging themselves, or dragged along, or left dead and dying on the way, may have been anticipated, and is not to be taken into account: but the crowding of such a multitude within the narrow limits of Lisbon and the lines of Torres Vedras, threatened the British army with famine and disease.*

Lord Wellington still retired; and Massena advanced but to make the discovery of an obstacle still more formidable than the devastation which encountered him beyond Coimbra, — the fortified lines of Torres Vedras. These lines are justly famous for the foresight with which they were designed and executed, and their not only protecting Lisbon, but, it may be said without forcing the relations of cause and effect, rescuing the Peninsula, and other nations, from the domination of France, and ultimately restoring a race of profligate politicians and base despots to a sway which they abused. They were strengthened and protected by 108 redoubts, scarped mountains, artificial inundations, 420 pieces of heavy artillery, and 80,000 fighting men.

Upon Massena's arrival at the foot of these entrenchments his resolution failed him.† He did not feel himself in a situation to attack, and he learned that an Anglo-Portuguese force had cut off his retreat. The two armies now continued in a state of mutual observation for several weeks. Massena, harassed and hopeless, fell back, in November,

* Narrative, &c. of the Marquess of Londonderry.

† Mem. Nap.

upon Santarem, and early in 1811, upon the frontier of Spain.

Lord Wellington gained in this campaign the title of "the modern Fabius," and Massena lost that of "the favourite child of victory." Both the victor and the vanquished have been freely criticised by military writers. So much depends upon sagacity and energy in war that it would be rash to adopt opinions which have ascribed much of lord Wellington's success to fortuitous superiorities of which he did not sufficiently avail himself; and so much depends upon fortune that it would be equally rash to adopt the censures of Massena, who had obtained more victories than any other general of the revolution and the empire. Napoleon, criticising this campaign without anger at St. Helena, says that Massena violated in it the essential rules of offensive war, and concludes his opinion with "il n'avait pas raisonné son operation."

Portugal was thus liberated, but the French were substantial, though not undisputed, masters of Spain. Here, however, a new power had begun to act, and soon co-operated powerfully in — if truth and subsequent events admit the use of the phrase — the deliverance of the Spanish people. The cortes of the kingdom were shut up, it is true, within the Isle of Leon, but the concentrated intelligence of the country had here a precious footing, which enabled it to raise the nation by the unchained force of discussion and the press.

This imperfect *coup-d'œil* may give some idea of the state of public affairs at home and abroad when the prince of Wales became regent of the United Kingdom.

CHAP. XVII.

1811, 1812.

OPENING OF THE FIRST SESSION UNDER THE REGENCY. — DISPUTES BETWEEN THE IRISH GOVERNMENT AND THE CATHOLICS. — THE BULLION COMMITTEE. — REINSTATEMENT OF THE DUKE OF YORK. — CAMPAIGN OF PORTUGAL.

THE prince of Wales was installed regent on the 5th, and opened the session of parliament, by commission, on the 12th of February. An opinion prevailed that he regarded himself merely as the temporary and ceremonial head of the government. It was supposed that he endured rather than adopted the Perceval ministry. The popular belief was corroborated by his not opening the session in person, and by the tone of the commissioners' speech, which differed in no respect (beyond the allusion to the regency) from that which the ministers would have employed had no change in the executive power taken place. The opposition, in both houses, expressly dissociated the ministry and the regent, and condemned without dividing on the addresses moved in answer to the speech. But the prime minister, Mr. Perceval, replied to some observations of Mr. Whitbread in a tone which indicated full confidence in the security of his power. On the 21st of February the prince regent declined

the provision which it was intended to make for his household, on the express ground that "during a temporary regency he would not accept that which ought to belong to the crown."

It is scarcely conceivable that the prince regent, or any other person of ordinary reflection and information, should suppose the king's return to the exercise of his functions within the range of probability. His previous illness, his age, his habitual state of delusion, with only a few tranquil rather than lucid intervals, rendered recovery in his case hopeless. He was seen, or shown, it is true, once or twice on horseback in Windsor Park; but Doctor Willis and his attendants never lost sight of him; and the exhibition was but a contemptible, if not criminal, artifice of party. Were he even restored to the state of health which immediately preceded his present illness, it would have been a cruelty to reinstate him; unless, indeed, the sceptre should be regarded in his hand as a mere bauble for his personal gratification and amusement—not for the exercise of discretion and power. The true motive of the prince was his being a restricted regent, and whilst this air of filial duty and personal moderation conciliated parties and the public, he subjected himself to privation only for a year.

Some instances, in which he was represented as interposing his authority, were calculated and proclaimed to win him popular favour at the direct expense of the minister. The whigs still held fast to the hope that the ministry would expire with the restrictions, and proclaimed one act of the prince with pompous eulogies. It was a rebuff which he

gave Mr. Perceval. After the story had gone the round of the clubs and coteries, the following circumstantial version was given to the public in the Morning Chronicle, then the recognised organ of the whigs: —

"Last week the chancellor of the exchequer submitted to his royal highness a military arrangement, in consequence of the death of lord Cardigan, to which he trusted to be honoured with the prince regent's approbation.

"Earl Harcourt to be governor of Windsor Castle, in the room of the earl of Cardigan deceased; general Charles Craufurd to be governor-general of the military college at Marlow, in the room of earl Harcourt.

"The prince regent signified his entire acquiescence in the appointment of earl Harcourt to Windsor Castle; he knew it would be perfectly agreeable to his majesty; and he had reason to believe that he had designed him to be the successor of earl Cardigan. The prince also expressed the high respect which he entertained for the talents and services of general Craufurd. He had high claims on the gratitude of his country; and the country had not been unmindful of his claims. His royal highness said, that to the best of his recollection, general Craufurd had a pension of 1200*l.* a year on his own life and that of the duchess his wife. He had a regiment of dragoon guards, and he was the lieutenant-governor of Tynemouth, bringing him altogether above 3000*l.* a year; and, therefore, he must hesitate in adding to these ap-

pointments, while so many other gallant officers had not an equal provision.

" Mr. Perceval strongly urged the general's high merits, and besides begged leave respectfully to state to his royal highness, that his claims were powerfully seconded by his son-in-law, the duke of Newcastle, *whose support in parliament was most essential to his majesty's administration, perhaps was of more consequence to them than that of any other individual.*

" The prince regent, in answer to this argument, made a declaration to the following purport:— ' Sir, I did not expect such a reason to be assigned; but I am not sorry that it is so in an instance like the present, when it enables me to make known my resolution without disparagement to the gallant officer in question. I repeat, that I have a high respect for his merits, which have met their reward; but I must tell you, once for all, that I never *can* nor *will* consent to bestow any place or appointment meant to be an asylum or reward for the toils and services of our gallant soldiers and seamen, *on account of any parliamentary connection, or in return for parliamentary votes. This is my fixed determination, and, I trust, I shall never again be solicited in the same way.*'

" The minister bowed, and took his leave."

This story has some obvious improbabilities. The prince, it may be said, could not have been so unfilial as to make a cutting reflection upon his father's government and reign, or so ignorant of the art of government in England as to suppose that any administration could venture to disoblige a great proprietor of boroughs. It may also be asked,

and was asked at the time, how that which passed between the prince regent and the minister, in confidence, could become publicly known? The minister's prudence, it was urged, would dictate silence; and the regent would not disclose a confidential conversation with his responsible servant. The following was the explanation given in reply: Mr. Perceval communicated his failure to the young duke of Newcastle, in a letter, which the duke, with the indiscretion natural to his age, anger, and disappointment, freely showed amongst his friends. This has an air of truth, and was not authoritatively denied. But in admitting the fact of the rebuff, the rhetoric with which it is adorned may be safely discarded. There is, at this distance of time, and with the light of experience, something to provoke a smile, in the credulity of the public and of the whigs. The former hailed a golden age of government from which parliamentary traffic in votes and scandalous pluralities of office should disappear, whilst the latter looked upon the minister's days as counted.

The first question of importance which came before parliament in this first session of the regency grew out of the unhappy system still pursued in Ireland. A frank and manly despotism would have been better than the hermaphrodite government of that country. It provoked the people to demand relief, and enabled the government to oppress. At this moment it led to a direct collision between the Irish government and the Irish catholics. The government in Ireland was administered in name by the lord lieutenant, acting by and with the advice

of his privy council, but, in fact, by the Irish secretary and attorney-general. The duke of Richmond, lord lieutenant, with little knowledge, and no application to business, gave his mornings to representations of state, his private amusements, or *ennui*, his evenings to party revels or convivial indulgence with his friends. The fixtures of the privy council, consisting of Irish court pensioners, who had sold themselves at the union, and a bishop or two, joined in signing proclamations, upon which they would not presume to have a voice. Lord Manners, the chancellor of Ireland, had occupation enough between the magistracy and the church, and left the rest, as he safely might, to an attorney-general of congenial mind. In a country where the chief business of government is the enactment and enforcement of criminal laws; where, in short, the administration is essentially penal; the chief burden of government naturally devolves on the public prosecutor. The secretary, Mr. Wellesley Pole, brother of lords Wellington and Wellesley, disdaining the Irish secretaryship, in the growing *éclat* of his family and his own aspirings, was frequently in England. Hence, from general and particular causes, the chief direction of affairs was vested in the Irish attorney-general, Saurin, whose name and administration attained more importance and notoriety than usually fell to the lot of the mere law-officer in a province.

Mr. Saurin was the descendant of one of those French protestant families which were driven abroad by the revocation of the edict of Nantz. A man of talent, information, independent public

principles, private integrity, and social benevolence, and the hereditary victim of religious intolerance, one would expect to find him the most liberal, enlightened, and earnest advocate of religious freedom. But from one of the many anomalies and weaknesses of human nature and character, he cherished the hereditary resentments and wrongs of his sect and family, and would avenge them with rancorous retaliation upon the Irish catholics. The latter, at this period, looked upon the regency as the era of their deliverance. Hitherto their affairs were managed by an association of private gentlemen, appointed by the catholics of Dublin, and acting in the name of the catholics of Ireland. Whether it was that the catholics throughout the country began to take a stronger interest in the question, or that the managers in the metropolis wished to array the whole catholic community of Ireland in support of the cause, a circular notice from the committee in Dublin invited the several counties to send a specific number of persons, who should co-operate in preparing and forwarding a petition for the repeal of the penal laws. Mr. Wellesley Pole left London precipitately for Dublin in the beginning of February, and, on his arrival, issued a circular letter of astounding effect. It set forth, in substance, that the Roman catholics of the several counties were called upon to assemble and nominate persons as representatives, delegates, or managers, in an unlawful assembly, calling itself the catholic committee of Dublin, and required magistrates and sheriffs to arrest all persons so acting, as guilty of a misdemeanour. This requisition was

made under the authority of the convention act of 1793; a statute so oppressive odious and temporary in its objects, that it had fallen into disuse.

Lord Moira brought this circular before the house of lords on the 18th of February, in terms of astonishment and indignation. He compared the conduct of ministers, in throwing what he called a firebrand among the people of Ireland, to that of desperate incendiaries, who set a house in flames because they could no longer inhabit it; and moved for a copy of the secretary's letter. Lord Liverpool disclaimed all knowledge of the letter until it had already appeared, but justified it by information, public and private, respecting the proceedings and intentions of the Irish Roman catholics. He concurred in the motion, but moved that a copy of the circular letter of the secretary of the catholic committee should also be laid on the table. A similar course was taken by Mr. Ponsonby and Mr. Perceval, in the house of commons. The leading catholics in Dublin manifested a disposition to act in disregard of the circular as illegal; and the most serious alarm prevailed for the peace of Ireland. On the 22d lord Lansdowne, supported by lords Grenville and Grosvenor, brought the subject again before the lords, and moved for copies of all communications on the subject between government and the lord lieutenant of Ireland. Lord Liverpool replied that their lordships had already sufficient information, and the motion was negatived.

In the mean time a collision had taken place between two stipendiary magistrates and a meeting of catholic gentlemen in Dublin; but without violence. The meeting disclaimed delegation, and

the magistrates did not venture to act. Mr. Wellesley Pole vindicated the Irish government, in his place, on the 7th of March. He added little to the stock of argument or information, but enlivened the house by an indignant sally against the impertinence of the Dublin demagogues and newspapers, in presuming to disparage his capacity. The matter was taken up once more on the 4th of April, by the late lord Stanhope. That remarkable man took an able and original view of the subject, compared the circular with the convention act, and argued with his usual acuteness, only rendered more effective by his usual eccentricity, that the convention act in construction of law did not bear out the circular letter. The chancellor was reduced by him to the necessity of avowing that the letter was a slovenly state paper.

In the months of March and April sir Samuel Romilly carried through the house of commons five bills for the mitigation of the criminal laws. The personal knowledge and good sense of the commons over-ruled the vulgar authority of the lawyers in that house; but three of the five bills were thrown out in deference to the law lords in the other. It is melancholy to reflect on the slow progress of the most obvious reform in England, against not alone abuse, but inhumanity. Sir Samuel Romilly, virtuous and able as a lawyer and as a politician, laboured for years, and in vain, against criminal enactments so barbarous, that some of them would startle the rising generation. He was resisted chiefly by what are technically called the learned members of the house. The public have a besotted

notion, that because lawyers are the most competent expounders of actual law, they are therefore the most competent to determine upon law reform. The contrary is the fact. They have a hatred of innovation in jurisprudence, as going to destroy so much of what they have been in the habit of regarding as their knowledge.

On the 6th of May, Mr. Horner presented his famous report from the bullion committee, appointed in the preceding year. He introduced it with an able, clear, and elaborate statement of his views. The main result which he proposed to deduce and establish, was, that the paper currency was depreciated, and that the only effectual remedy was the resumption of cash payments by the bank. The first was a notorious, palpable, and proved fact. A person had been prosecuted to conviction for carrying on a clandestine trade in guineas, which he bought at twenty-seven shillings each, in bank notes. The remedy proposed was almost equally clear and conclusive: yet had Mr. George Rose the hardihood to argue, during a two hours' reply, that the paper currency was *not* depreciated; that the bank issues could *not* affect the circulation, and that the resumption of cash payments would *not* bring back into circulation a single guinea! Mr. Horner moved a series of resolutions, embodying the facts and principles urged by him in his speech. The first was negatived by a majority of 151 to 75, and decided the fate of the rest. A series of rival resolutions, in unison with the reasonings of Mr. Rose, and supported by the ministry, were introduced by Mr. Vansittart on the 13th,

and after adjourned discussions, passed on the 16th of May. They may be consulted as precious monuments of absurdities, urged in bad faith, under an imperious necessity, when the true reasons could not be safely avowed.

This subject, — passing for a moment over some intervening topics, — was brought under the notice of the house of lords, by earl Stanhope towards the end of June. Notwithstanding the solemn assurances of Mr. Rose, and the resolutions of Mr. Vansittart, the depreciation of the paper currency became still greater, and more grievous; and the difference between bank notes and guineas began to be openly acted upon in the price of common market commodities. But the most formidable blow given to the fallacies of ministers and their system was struck by a nobleman, who unites studious talent with wit, humour, and ingenuity. Lord King brought the question to a conclusive issue at once, by giving notice to his tenants, whose contracts were antecedent to the depreciation, that he would receive payment of rent "in guineas, or in Portugal coins of equal weight, or in bank paper of a sum sufficient to purchase (at the present market price) the weight of standard gold requisite to discharge the rent, and in those only." *

"I saw," says lord King, in the house of lords, "no course left but to give up my property, or hold it at such value as the bank, in its good pleasure, might choose to put upon it; or to avail myself of the means which the law as yet affords me for its preservation." A state of things so deeply affecting

* Letter from Lord King to his Tenants in 1811.

property, contracts, and prices, excited the greatest alarm. Lord Stanhope, early in July, without concert with either party, submitted a comprehensive plan for a new species of legal tender. The ministers adopted a part of it, and he in consequence abandoned the whole. Eventually the result was a nondescript bill, which declared that bank notes should be taken only at their professed value, but at the same time did not make them legal tender. It however deprived the landlord of his summary remedy by distress, where tender of payment had been made in notes. The great variety of conflicting views and principles, all confidently urged in the debates on this subject, seem to reduce finance as a subject of knowledge or reasoning to a state of hopeless uncertainty. Perhaps the most permanently interesting observation was one made by lord Stanhope. He regarded, he said, *the public creditors as mortgagees, who had a right to be paid in full before the other proprietors of the national wealth took any thing.*

The clergy of the established church were alarmed this year at the growth of methodism, and suggested to lord Sidmouth an insidious modification, or amendment as he called it, of the toleration act. His object was to throw difficulties in the way of obtaining a license to preach. It was denounced and exposed *in limine* by lord Holland, vehemently opposed by all classes of dissenters, and abandoned.

But the most interesting subject debated during this session, was the restoration of the duke of York to the office of commander-in-chief. It was the only act of government which had yet emanated

directly from the prince regent. A change of circumstances had certainly taken place. Colonel Wardle, it appeared, had failed, like the duke of York, to make good his private engagements to Mrs. Clarke. She accordingly turned round, and charged him with having bribed and suborned her to ruin the duke. Mrs. Clarke not only discredited her own evidence, but left no doubt that the accusation really sprang out of disreputable motives. The two principal confederates carried on a fierce war of pamphlets and paragraphs, actions for debt, and prosecutions for perjury and libel, no longer worth notice, — or only so far as they were supposed to implicate the duke of Kent. The duke's secretary appeared to be a party in the confederacy, but there was nothing to justify the imputation on his master. The duke of Kent, however, put several exculpatory questions, as affecting himself, to his secretary; and both the questions and answers, negativing in the strongest terms either intrigue or enmity on his part, were published in the newspapers. But supposing (to use the expression of Mr. Canning) "infamy to rest" on the motives of Colonel Wardle and the evidence of Mrs. Clarke, there were strong cases of corruption and connivance proved by unimpeached witnesses, and the duke's own letters admitted in evidence at the bar of the house.* It was upon

* In one letter to Mrs. Clarke, he said, "I have just received your note, and Sonyn's business (one of the cases charged) shall remain as it is." In another he writes, "Clavering is mistaken, my angel, in thinking that any new regiments are to be raised; *you had better therefore tell him so*, and that you are sure there would be no use in applying for him."

this evidence that the opinion of the country, and the vote of the house had driven the duke of York from his office, and not upon the veracity of Mrs. Clarke or the purity of colonel Wardle.

The re-instatement of the duke of York was taken up by lord Milton in the house of commons. He treated the subject with temper and independence; and moved a resolution, that under the recent circumstances of the duke's resignation, the ministers had acted improperly and indecorously in advising his re-appointment as commander-in-chief. Several members, among whom were Mr. Whitbread, sir Francis Burdett, and lord Althorp, supported this resolution. It was negatived by a majority of 296 to 47. The fact was, that a re-action had taken place in favour of the duke of York, both within and without the walls of parliament. Several members avowed their error, and expressed regret for their former votes; even Mr. Ponsonby, the leader of the opposition, voted against the motion. The known wishes of the prince regent would account for the majority in the house of commons, and the change of opinion, at least of conduct, among the whigs. But the same re-action had taken place in the public mind; some thought he had been sufficiently punished, others confounded the infamy of the accusers with the innocence of the accused.

The catholic claims were submitted to the house of commons on the 31st of May by Mr. Grattan;—to the house of lords on the 18th of June, by lord Donoughmore;—debated at great length, rejected by sweeping majorities, and forgotten in England—but not in Ireland. The rejection of their claims roused

the energy, rather than the anger, of the catholics. Confident in their strength, in the value of activity and union, and in the legality of their proceedings, they resolved to disregard the circular of the Irish secretary. Meetings were held, and delegates appointed, in the course of the summer, throughout the several counties. On the 19th of October a committee of 300 met within the walls of a theatre or circus in Dublin, amidst a vast concourse of spectators. Lord Fingal took the chair, lord Netterville proposed the draft of a petition: in seventeen minutes the petition was adopted, the object of the meeting attained, and the chair vacated. The conduct of the government in the mean time was embarrassed and timid: it was evident that the secretary became alarmed at, what he called, his own vigour. Something however, should be done to guard against the supposition that the government brooked defiance from the catholic committee. Accordingly an alderman and stipendiary magistrate made their appearance to disperse the meeting; after the meeting had already broken up. This proceeding was better calculated to provoke derision than command obedience, and rendered necessary a second and more efficient display of the secretary's vigour. Five persons were arrested on a judge's warrant, as violators of the convention act, at a catholic meeting held in Dublin on the 9th of July. In the following term, Dr. Sheridan, one of them, was put upon his trial in the Irish court of King's Bench. The public mind of Ireland, protestant as well as catholic, waited the result with intense and various feelings. It may be said that

the construction of the case turned essentially upon a single word. The convention act declared illegal certain assemblages under the "pretence" of petitioning. It was contended in this case that petitioning was not the pretence, but the real purpose. The attorney-general maintained that, in legal construction, the terms were synonymous. Mr. Burrowes, an Irish barrister of rare and unappreciated eloquence, said the attorney-general must have resorted for this interpretation to Milton's Pandemonium, where it is said,

"Spirits, in our just pretences armed, fell with us."

The chief-justice, concurring with the attorney-general, charged in the most decided tone against the accused; but the jury, all protestants, after an hour's deliberation, pronounced a verdict of acquittal. A tremendous peal of applause rang through the court, the hall, the galleries, and the avenues. The attorney-general abandoned the remaining prosecutions; and the persons who remained to be tried commenced actions against the chief justice, under whose warrant they had been arrested. A third meeting of the catholic committee was however dispersed on the 23d of December; but in three days an aggregate catholic meeting passed a series of resolutions; denouncing as tyrannical, and defying as illegal, the proceedings of the Irish government; and ordering that a petition for redress should be presented to the prince regent upon the expiration of the restrictions.

England at the same time was not free from agitation. The stocking-weavers of Nottinghamshire, thrown out of employment by the severe

pressure of the times, and the adoption of a new machine, which enabled the employers to dispense with manual labour, commenced the system of outrage, which led in the following year to the formidable riots of the "Luddites."

The foreign incidents of striking interest during the first year of the regency were for the most part confined to the Peninsula. Massena, it has been stated, took up a strong position at Santarem. Lord Wellington rather watched his movements than pursued him, when he had thus fallen back from the lines of Torres Vedras. Never perhaps were two captains opposed to each other in situations of such remarkable contrast. Lord Wellington possessed his strong lines, the resources not only of Portugal but of England through the harbour of Lisbon, an army disciplined, obedient, and full of confidence in itself and its commander. Massena's army had subsisted since the battle of Busaco only by marauding. The consequence was the loss of discipline, and of confidence in its chief. Fearing to infringe the injunctions of Napoleon, that he should maintain his ground in Portugal, he seemed to cling, with desperate pertinacity, to his position at Santarem. The Portuguese had practised treacherous and inhuman cruelties upon the French. The latter, stimulated by famine and revenge, now retaliated upon them the full measure of their own crimes. French writers have asserted that lord Wellington could, by a vigorous attack, have crushed the French army, which was absolutely sinking from inanition at this moment. No attack was made, and Massena fell back upon his communications with Ciudad Rodrigo. He

moved his sick and baggage on the 4th, and commenced the retreat of his army at eight o'clock in the evening of the 5th of March, committing to Ney the command of the rear guard.

Lord Wellington beheld the French lines deserted on the morning of the 6th, sent a part of marshal Beresford's division of Portuguese to protect Coimbra against a French corps which was marching upon Thamars, and pursued the main body of the French in person. On the 9th of March a sharp and gallant skirmish took place at the village of Pombal, between a few squadrons of British and French cavalry, in sight of the advanced and rear guards of the respective armies. On the 10th, Massena commenced his arrangements for crossing the Mondego, and lord Wellington resolved upon making a vigorous attack. The result was the remarkable combat of Redinha on the 12th. Ney sustained, with the French rear guard, for several hours, the shock of the mass of the British army, and then effected his retreat in the following manner, with safety and facility. Lord Wellington's intention was to seize, Ney's to pass, the defile of Redinha. Whilst the engagement still continued, Ney gave orders that the colours of each battalion should be conveyed and planted, under the care of an adjutant, on the other side of the ravine. The retreat was commenced by signal with the utmost rapidity, and the French troops suddenly disappeared from the eyes of the British, who as suddenly made for the brow of a hill, which would admit of plunging a destructive fire upon the retreating and encumbered French masses. Ney had

provided against this movement: two battalions placed by him in ambuscade checked the British by a close and deadly fire, and effected their own retreat, whilst the battalions, which had before retreated, were already re-formed under their respective colours in order of battle. In this obscure, but well-fought combat, lord Wellington had the mortification to know that Ney had awed him into mistaken caution, by the strategic skill and artful confidence with which he presented his inadequate force, and the happy thought by which he effected his retreat. Had the overwhelming mass of the British been directed against him, with quickness and vigour, he must, according to military authorities, both French and English, have been crushed.

Massena continued his retreat; but misled by general Montbrun as to the force opposed to his passage at Coimbra, he relinquished that line for the route of Miranda de Corvo. Here again lord Wellington is charged with having lost a precious opportunity. Due foresight, and rapidity of movement, would have enabled him to cut off Massena's retreat, by sending a division from Thamars to occupy the conical height, which commands the approach to Miranda: he preferred, however, the system, which in the opinion of his countrymen proved him the only worthy rival of the ancient "cunctator," obtained him from the French the appellation of *le général temporiseur*, and had the unequivocal merit of driving the enemy out of Portugal. Both generals continued their deep and skilful game of retreat, pursuit, and skirmishing. The last, and one of the most sanguinary, of those skirmishing combats, was

that of Sabugal, which had the effect of determining Massena to retire under the protection of Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo. He crossed the frontier into Spain on the 5th of April. Thus ended a retreat, in which "famine, sword, and fire crouched for employment," and never more abundantly obtained it.

Lord Wellington, having ordered general Spencer to invest Almeida, passed into Spanish Estramadura for the purpose of a personal conference with marshal Beresford. They met at Elvas on the 21st, and reconnoitred Badajos on the 22d. Massena having reorganised, and reinforced his army, recrossed the Agueda, for the purpose of compelling the British force before Almeida to raise the siege. Lord Wellington had in the mean time arrived at his head quarters; and on the morning of the 5th of May both armies engaged at Fuentes d'Onoro. Massena had decidedly the advantage at the commencement, but lost the victory already in his grasp, between the valour and firmness of the British, discord and disobedience among his lieutenants, and, it has been said, his own disgust at being superseded by Marmont, who had already arrived to take the command.

If lord Wellington had hitherto pursued a system of caution, he here exposed himself to battle in a position, which placed him between the alternatives of success and ruin. Each party kept its own ground, and claimed the victory. Lord Wellington, however, had ensured his main object, to protect the blockade of Almeida; this place fell into the hands of the British on the 11th. The capture of Almeida

had lost much of its value as well as honour, in the escape of the French garrison, under general Brennier, who, by an enterprise of singular skill and hardihood, had blown up the works, cut his way through the British posts, at the moment when they were astonished by the explosions, and effected his retreat. Marmont took the command of the French on the 7th, and distributed the French army into its cantonments on the 11th of May.

In the mean time marshal Beresford, operating in Spanish Estramadura, had recovered Campo Mayor on the 26th of March, Olivenca on the 15th of April, and was now besieging Badajos. On the 12th of May he learned that a French army was on its way from Seville, under the command of marshal Soult.

He suspended his operations against Badajos, and prepared for battle in a position on the river Albuera, with a Spanish re-inforcement, commanded by Blake. Beresford's force was numerically superior; but he had only 7000 British, and the Spaniards were neither sufficiently disciplined, nor tractable, for military evolutions or cordial co-operation. Soult moved from Seville on the night of the 10th of April, joined the division of Latour Maubourg on the 12th, confronted Beresford on the 15th, with the river Albuera dividing them, put his troops in motion on the morning of the 16th, directed his chief attack against the right of the allies, and assailed them with such impetuosity and force, that the Spaniards abandoned to him the height which they occupied. A British division under general William Stewart made a desperately gallant effort

to dislodge him, first by firing, and then with the bayonet. It rained in torrents. The smoke of artillery and the clouds obscured the scene. Two regiments of French hussars, and one of Polish lancers, taking advantage of the darkness, turned and charged Stewart's division in flank. The carnage of the British was terrible. Two thirds of a brigade were slain or made prisoners. Beresford mingled personally in the fray, encountered a Polish lancer sword in hand, parried his lance, and unhorsed him. Generals Lumley and Cole brought up their divisions of cavalry and infantry, and the French were dislodged and driven back with terrific slaughter. Soult returned with his reserve to the attack; but his troops had lost strength, and expended their ardour; an attack which he ordered simultaneously on the left of the allies, was feebly conducted, and the whole French army retreated under a galling fire, in disorder, across the Albuera.

The great shock of this day's battle between Beresford and Soult was only of an hour and a half; but the strife was so fierce and deadly in that short space, that the battle of Albuera is distinguished as the most sanguinary of the Peninsular war. The field was covered with the dead and dying.

From the jealousy excited by Beresford's rank of Portuguese marshal-general, which placed him above the heads of many of his seniors in the British army, and the disposition to sacrifice every other reputation, with intolerant idolatry, to that of Wellington, the glory earned by Beresford at Albuera was depreciated and disputed both in the Peninsula and at

home. Politics, doubtless, also had their share in influencing opinions. But bad politics and an obnoxious name should not be allowed to interfere with the fame of the soldier. The French have been more just: "The moral influence of that disastrous affair," says a French military writer, "upon the French soldier was henceforth great and fatal. Those veteran warriors, always victorious in the north, and so often in Spain, no longer met the English without a certain diffidence." *

Both armies passed the 17th mutually observing each other. On the 18th Soult retreated, and Beresford resumed the siege of Badajos. Napoleon sent Marmont orders to second the operations of Soult in Estramadura. Lord Wellington having put Almeida in a state of defence, was at Elvas on the 19th, directing the operations on the Guadiana. He opened the trenches before Badajos on the night of the 29th, and ordered a party to mount the breach in the fort of San Cristoval on the 6th of June. After three attempts to scale the wall, the assailants were repulsed. During five days more, the battering artillery continually played upon the fort, and the breach was again attempted vainly and with loss. A trait of generous humanity is peculiarly touching amidst the horrors and the heat of war. The French called out to some wounded British officers, who were left in the fosse, to apply a ladder, and helped them into the place. Next day, the French governor, general Philipon, granted a three hours' truce, to carry away the wounded, and bury the dead. Marmont, having provided for the defence of Ciudad

* Victoires, Conquêtes, &c.

Rodrigo, went to support Soult on the Guadiana. Reinforced at the same time by Drouet, marshal Soult prepared once more to relieve Badajos, repassed the bloody field of Albuera on the 19th, and found that lord Wellington had already raised the siege on the morning of the 12th. A skirmish of cavalry at Elvas on the 23d of June terminated the operations in Estramadura. Lord Wellington repassed the Guadiana, and took up his cantonments, and marshal Soult returned to his head-quarters at Seville. The last exploit, and one of the most brilliant of this campaign, was the surprise and complete rout of the French general Girard, by general Hill, at Arroyo-Molinos, on the 27th of October. The British troops were suffering from sickness, as well as exhausted by fighting and fatigue: lord Wellington crossed the Agueda into Portugal, for the purpose of giving them the necessary repose.

In England, the public mind was deeply and exclusively intent upon the operations of the British troops in the peninsula. The French arms were uniformly victorious in Spain, when engaged only with the Spaniards: Cadiz alone, besieged by marshal Victor, held out successfully; and in the spring of this year sent a force of 8000 Spaniards and 3000 British, — the latter under the command of general Graham, but the whole commanded in chief by the Spanish general La Pena, — to attack the besiegers. They landed at Algesiras; concentrated their force at Tariffa; and after some affairs of posts, met the enemy in force at Barrosa. General Graham, abandoned by La Pena from treachery or cowardice, attacked the French, who were posted in greatly

superior numbers on the heights of Barrosa; and, in spite of a vigorous resistance, dislodged, and drove them back upon their entrenched lines. The French, however, possessed themselves of the other strong places, defeated the Spanish armies in the open country, and scattered the guerillas throughout Spain. The most important conquest made by them, and one of the most horrible ever made in any age or country, was that of Tarragona, stormed by Suchet, after a long and brave resistance, which only provoked an atrocious vengeance. It is difficult, however, in such a situation, to restrain the soldier, or reconcile military policy and the obligations of the commander with the feelings of humanity.

CHAP. XVIII.

1812.

UNRESTRICTED REGENCY. — ASSASSINATION OF MR. PERCEVAL. — NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE FORMATION OF A NEW CABINET. — LORD LIVERPOOL PREMIER. — PENINSULAR WAR. — RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN.

THE delusive hopes of the king's restoration to health, which the public in its simplicity had been taught to entertain, vanished before the close of 1811. A report of the queen's council, dated January 5. 1812, declared that of the king's physicians, "some did not despair, others did not wholly despair, and one could not help despairing, of his recovery." The session of parliament was opened by commission on the 7th of January. There is not in the whole history of the British parliament a session so remarkable on the whole, for the developement of eloquence, public spirit, party cabal, and court intrigue.

Its opening did not hold out this promise. The prince regent's speech consisted of a pompous recapitulation of disingenuous common-places. These were suitably echoed back by the house of lords, in an address moved and seconded by lords Shaftesbury and Brownlow. After some briefly contemptuous, rather than forcible, expressions of disapprobation, by lords Grenville and Grey, the address was unanimously agreed to.

There was a curious interruption of the usual routine in the house of commons. Lord Jocelyn, the destined mover of the address, either from want of promptitude, or from a wish to present himself with more solemn effect, was slowly preparing to rise, when sir Francis Burdett, who had already risen, caught the eye of the speaker, and obtained possession of the chair by a *coup-de-main*. The noble courtier with his bag and sword stood looking for a moment in speechless wonder, whilst the daring innovator proposed, by way of address, an elaborate memorial of public grievances, among which figured conspicuously the corrupt constitution of the house. Lord Jocelyn, who had in the mean time recovered from his surprise, moved the ministerial address as an amendment. Mr. Whitbread and Mr. Ponsonby censured the latter, but would not go the whole length of his grievances with sir Francis Burdett, who yet divided the house. It is the usage of divisions that the dissentients should go into the lobby. On this occasion only one solitary member * remained within, whilst sir Francis Burdett and lord Cochrane the mover and seconder, acted as tellers. The amendment was then unanimously agreed to. On the bringing up of the report next day, Mr. Whitbread condemned at great length the system pursued by ministers, and predicted from it still greater evils than those which, he affirmed, it had already produced. Mr. Perceval replied with presumptuous impatience, and cited, or rather parodied, a couplet from Pope, so coarse in its application, that Mr. Whitbread demanded and received from him a personal apology.

* Mr. Cuthbert.

All men's hopes, fears, and speculations, were now directed to the presumable conduct of the regent on the approaching expiration of the restrictions—and the strife of ambition, eloquence, and intrigue, soon began.

The administration was not merely weak but distracted. Mediocrity and talent have a natural reluctance to coalesce. Lord Wellesley conceived for the qualifications of Mr. Perceval the same contempt which Mr. Canning entertained for those of lord Castlereagh. He tendered his resignation, but continued, by the desire of the prince regent, to hold the seals of his office provisionally, until the restrictions should expire. Mr. Perceval used ineffectual, and according to lord Wellesley "unmannerly*," attempts to procure the immediate dismissal of his colleague. From the known partiality of the prince to lord Wellesley, and a variety of other circumstances, it was regarded as only not certain, that the first act of the unrestricted regent would be the dismissal of Mr. Perceval. The high tone of the minister in the house of commons did not weaken this opinion; it was supposed that his confidence was but assumed to impose on the house and the country. On the night of the 13th of February, he startled the whigs and imparted joy to his supporters, by the following triumphant insinuation:—"I do not know," said he, "what may be the golden dreams of honourable gentlemen, respecting the continuance of the present ministry; but they may find the opening prospect not quite so consolatory as they imagine." He spoke in the security of

* See his "explanation." Parl. Deb.

knowledge. The prince had written his well known letter to the duke of York that very day.

This letter, though addressed to his "dearest Frederick," with the forms of familiar communication, was a deeply contrived state paper.* It began with adverting to the approaching expiration of the restrictions; re-stated the motives of filial affection which had, he said, induced him to continue his father's ministers; went over the successes of his first year's administration, declared that "a new era" was arrived; and having thrown out in passing the following ominous intimation, — "I have no predilections to indulge," concluded with these words, — "having made this communication of my sentiments in this new and extraordinary crisis of our affairs, I cannot conclude without expressing the gratification I should feel, if some of those persons with whom the early habits of my public life were formed would strengthen my hands and constitute a part of my government. With such support, and aided by a vigorous and united administration, formed on the most liberal basis, I shall look with additional confidence to a prosperous issue of the most arduous contest in which Great Britain was ever engaged. You are authorised to communicate these sentiments to lord Grey, who, I have no doubt, will make them known to lord Grenville."

The duke of York, of course, made the desired communication. Lords Grey and Grenville, also, as a matter of course, declined the mockery of an offer to accede to the administration of Mr. Perceval.†

* See An. Reg.

† For their answer see An. Reg.

There was palpable bad faith, and enough to ensure failure, in the transmission of the overture through the duke of York. The granting of the catholic claims, it was well known, would be made an indispensable condition by lords Grey and Grenville, and the feelings of the duke of York on that subject were equally notorious. Religious bigotry, the only public or party passion of sufficient acrimony and power to act upon one so sensually self-indulgent, reckless, good-tempered, and dull, rendered the duke of York the most direct, honest, and uncompromising adversary of Catholic emancipation, to his last hour.

The prince regent's letter, with the answer of lords Grey and Grenville, appeared in every newspaper through the kingdom; and produced, as might be expected, an extraordinary sensation. His disclaimer of "predilections" was used, in all the forms of exulting ridicule, as a taunt against the whigs,—who, on the other hand, made the "new era" a by-word of pleasantry and sarcasm, and turned round upon their long-cherished prince with the bitterness and versatility of disappointed party-spirit. The ascendant of Mr. Perceval, thus unexpectedly established, was pronounced the result of some extraordinary and unknown influence.

There were those who ascribed it to the agency of fear.

Mr. Perceval, it was said, had obtained, as confidential law adviser to the princess of Wales, documents and information, which placed the prince in his power. This rumour was countenanced by the eagerness with which the minister bought up stray

copies of the noted "Book." Both previous and subsequent occurrences disprove it. The prince of Wales not only did not desire to suppress "The Book," but was with difficulty dissuaded from publishing it in 1806; and caused the publication of it to gratify his hatred of his wife, under the pretence of vindicating himself, in 1813.

Another influence was glanced at in party squibs, and more authoritatively in parliament. On the 9th of March, lord Borringdon asked lord Liverpool whether a letter, which had appeared in the newspapers, bearing the signature of the prince regent, and addressed to the duke of York, was authentic. Lord Liverpool would give neither admission nor denial as to what he called "the supposed letter;" but lords Grenville and Grey acknowledged as authentic the reply to it, which professed to be written in their joint names. Lord Borringdon's object was not to establish the authenticity of the letter, which no one thought of doubting, but to bring the overture which it contained under the notice of the house. He did so on the 19th, and concluded his speech with proposing a resolution which recommended in substance a change of ministry.

The debate was, for the most part, a combat between catholic emancipation and exclusion. Its chief interest was derived from observations made with significant energy by lords Darnley and Grey. Lord Darnley declared that ministers owed their places to unavowed advisers, of whom the house and the constitution knew nothing, and whose selfish and bigotted whispers in the royal ear endangered the safety of the state. This declaration, he added,

had already been made by him to the prince regent personally. Lord Grey concluded a speech of remarkable power, with declaring that every other objection to the system of ministers sank into insignificance compared with one to which he should freely allude, — the dependence of the ministry for its existence upon an unseen influence, which lurked behind the throne; — a power alien to the constitution, but become unhappily too familiar to the country; — a disastrous and disgusting influence which consolidated abuses into a system, and prevented either public complaint or honest counsel from reaching the royal ear; — an influence which it was the duty of parliament to brand with signal reprobation; and for the destruction of which it was his rooted, unalterable principle, and that of his friends who acted with him, to have an understanding with parliament before they took office under the crown. Mr. Lyttleton, in a debate upon sinecure places, in the house of commons, declared that the regent was surrounded by "minions and favourites;" and intimated that the rewards which should have been conferred upon those who had defended their country in her armies and navies were lavished upon "Gavestons and Spencers." But the most distinct and vehement denunciation of all was uttered by lord Donoughmore, on moving the consideration of the catholic claims. The late lord Donoughmore did not reach the political station to which he aspired, but was no common man. With imposing talents, he combined inordinate ambition, an impatient and vindictive vanity, the eloquence of the passions, the suppleness of a courtier, and

the fearlessness of a demagogue. His temper in this instance was inflamed by a sincere and hereditary zeal in the cause of the Irish catholics, and envenomed by private pique. Sitting as a representative Irish peer, he solicited to be created an English viscount; was refused; and avenged himself by one of the most remarkable pieces of rhetorical personality and elaborate vituperation ever spoken within the walls of parliament. A citation so violent and personal, and throwing no additional light upon history, might gratify curiosity, but would be an offence against better taste, and is therefore dispensed with: the passage, moreover, may be found, quite as keenly barbed as it was spoken, in the Parliamentary Debates.

The secret history of the court of George IV., both as regent and king, belongs to posthumous memoirs and a future generation. Like all princes naturally weak or indolent, or enervated by mere animal enjoyment, he surrounded himself with those who would minister to his humours, amusements, and pleasures; and who, without mortifying his pride, would save him the labour of thinking.

Preferring female society, he could hardly have escaped female influence. From the inert force of his indolence, rather than from steady attachment or the absence of caprice, he passed his regency and reign under the dominion of only two successive dynasties. That which becomes valuable or curious, as illustrating social manners and the hidden machinery of government, after the lapse of time, would be mere scandal whilst yet recent. It would, however, be the most absurd affectation to

abstain from naming the house of Hertford, as that which exercised at this period an obnoxious ascendant.

The overture to lords Grey and Grenville having failed, and the regent appearing disposed to continue Mr. Perceval at the head of the government, lord Wellesley again tendered his resignation. The prince regent desired he would state his views of the necessary changes in the system of administering the government. He stated, in reply, two leading principles,—a conciliatory adjustment of the catholic claims, and a more vigorous prosecution of the peninsular war. The prince regent, in rejoinder, signified to him, through the lord chancellor, that his resignation was accepted; and lord Castlereagh was soon after appointed his successor as secretary for foreign affairs.

The re-appointment of this minister was far from satisfactory to the public; but it sufficed for the house of commons, the majorities of which seemed to be governed, not by the popularity or efficiency of ministers, but by their apparent tenure of court favour. Lord Castlereagh came in under the auspices of the Hertford family.

The administration proceeded with triumphant divisions, until Mr. Perceval was deprived of life by the hand of an assassin, in the lobby of the house of commons, on the 11th of May. This shocking crime sprang from no political or personal hatred to Mr. Perceval. That minister may have excited dislike or disgust by his canting bigotry and excessive presumption; but his common-place ambition, and the times in which he governed, precluded his being the

object of deadly vengeance, or political fanaticism. The assassin, without being a maniac, had brooded over supposed injuries from the Russian government, suffered by him as a trader, and the denial of what he thought justice by his own government, until his moral perceptions on that particular subject became disturbed. Lord Granville Levison Gower, who had been ambassador in Russia, heard with a shudder, the assassin calmly declare on his trial that, if the opportunity had offered, the weapon would have been aimed by preference at him.

The public judgment of Mr. Perceval was greatly affected by the manner of his death: the mischievous minister and pigmy statesman were forgotten in the father of a numerous family, and victim of an atrocious crime. Pensions were bestowed on his widow and children with a liberality which may be excused; and funeral honours on his remains, with an incongruity which deprived such distinctions of all future worth. Mr. Perceval had more of the intriguer than the politician. His confidence as a debater in the house of commons was not that of conviction or talent, but of knowing that he had an obsequious majority at his back. As a rhetorician his resources did not exceed those of any expert and unscrupulous pleader at *nisi prius*. He must have been a diminutive figure, or he would not have already disappeared from the page of history, and the memory of men.

Upon the death of Mr. Perceval the ministry was once more disorganised. Lord Liverpool took his place as head of the administration, and as the depository of the regent's instructions to reinforce

it. He applied to Mr. Canning and lord Wellesley for their aid. Under the proposed arrangement, lord Liverpool was to be first lord of the treasury, lord Castlereagh to continue foreign secretary, and leader of the house of commons; and the opinions of lord Liverpool and his colleagues were stated to be unchanged upon the catholic question and peninsular war. An overture upon such a basis must have been designed by its authors to fail; and the negotiation was promptly broken off. It was clear that the surviving colleagues of Mr. Perceval inherited his animosity to lord Wellesley. Their professed readiness to serve with him in the cabinet, was but hollow affectation or part of an intrigue. The regent and the Hertford party supposed that enough had been done by this vain demonstration to satisfy parliament and the public; and flattered themselves that the ministry would go on, with lords Liverpool and Castlereagh as ministerial leaders in their respective houses. Their triumph was not yet so near.

Mr. Stuart Wortley (the present lord Wharncliffe) moved, in the house of commons, on the 21st of May, an address to the prince regent, recommending such measures as might be best calculated to form an efficient administration. The drift of his motion and his speech was that the overture to Mr. Canning and lord Wellesley was not calculated to succeed, and that no efficient ministry could be formed, except upon the basis of adjusting the catholic claims. The previous question was rejected, and Mr. Stuart Wortley's motion carried by a majority of four against ministers. They immediately abandoned the field.

The prince regent now empowered lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning to form an administration. On the 23d of May, Mr. Canning communicated on the subject with lord Liverpool; and lord Wellesley with lords Grey and Grenville. A direct refusal was given by lord Liverpool and his friends, to become members of any administration formed by their late colleague, lord Wellesley. Their animosity sprang from lord Wellesley's having stigmatised in a printed paper, then recently made public, the ministerial incapacity of Mr. Perceval.* Lord Wellesley had a frank and conciliatory personal conference with lords Grey and Grenville, which ended in his being referred back by them for more distinct and extensive powers. A whole week passed without any further communication to them; but did not pass idly at Carlton House. It was employed by the secret cabal in endeavours to effect a reconciliation between the Liverpool and Wellesley parties; which would render unnecessary any further negotiation with lords Grey and Grenville. The endeavour failed; and on the 1st of June lord Wellesley returned to lords Grey and Grenville with fresh powers and a specific proposition. His proposition was an offer of a section of the ministry, under what Mr. Elliot called "a sort of partition treaty." The result would have been "a balanced cabinet," on the principle which has since been acted upon in France, by Louis XVIII. under the appropriate denomination of "*jeu de bascule.*" Lords Grey

* Lord Wellesley admitted the authenticity of the paper, but disclaimed any share in its publication. See Parl. Deb., and An. Reg.

and Grenville, having consulted with their leading political friends, rejected the overture, as tending to establish within the cabinet "a system of counteraction," which would at once compromise their characters, and produce disunion and weakness in the administration of the public affairs.

The negotiation having thus broken off after two days' deliberation, lord Wellesley on the 3d of June resigned his trust into the hands of the prince regent. On the 5th, lord Moira, having previously had a conversation with the duke of Bedford, addressed a note to lords Grey and Grenville, proposing a conference. They declined an unauthorised discussion as unusual, and likely to lead to no advantageous result. Lord Moira, in rejoinder, informed them next day that, since his first communication, he had received authority and full liberty from the prince regent to negotiate specially with them. A conference, at which lord Erskine was present, by the desire of lord Moira, took place on the 6th of June. It may be useful to state here, that lord Moira had, in conversation with lord Spencer, previously declared his determination not to admit as a subject for consideration, in any new arrangements, the great offices of the prince regent's household. Lord Spencer objected to this exemption as unprecedented and unconstitutional, — failed to make any impression upon the mind of lord Moira, — prepared lords Grey and Grenville for lord Moira's objections, — and gave them his opinion, which entirely coincided with their own, that in the conference with lord Moira, the household should be made a preliminary question. Accordingly lords Grey and Grenville

asked whether lord Moira's "full liberty" extended to the consideration of "new appointments to those great offices of the household, which have been usually included in the political arrangements made on a change of administration; and stated that they made this stipulation solely on public, not personal, grounds, as necessary to give to a new government that character of efficiency and stability, and those marks of the constitutional support of the crown, which were required to enable it to act usefully for the public service." Lord Moira answered that he was not restricted by the prince regent; but that he would not himself agree to "the positive exercise of such a power in the formation of an administration."—"A decided difference of opinion," says the minute of the conference, "as to this point having been thus expressed on both sides, the conversation ended with mutual declarations of regret."

Lord Moira went back to the regent, announced his failure, resigned his commission, and advised the revival of the Perceval ministry. Lord Liverpool was accordingly appointed first lord of the treasury, and announced his appointment in the house of lords on the 8th of June.

The secret, and only desired, end of the negotiations was thus attained at last, and the household party, which hemmed in the regent, a willing captive, triumphed. The proceedings which followed in both houses throw considerable light upon the negotiations.

The great offices of the household, it should be remembered, were held by members of the Hertford family.

Lord Moira accounted for his tenacity on the question of those offices, as arising from his fear that, by submitting them to consideration, "he should countenance every ribald tale of scandal which had been circulated abroad." The course pursued by him had precisely the effect which he professed his desire to avoid, and which it is strange that he should not have foreseen. There is something incomprehensible in the system adopted by lord Moira. "Is your royal highness prepared," said he to the prince regent, "if I should advise it, to part with the officers of your household?"— The answer was, "I am."— "Then," rejoined lord Moira, "your royal highness shall not part with one of them;" * and, having thus heroically or theatrically taken the responsibility on himself, he went upon his inauspicious mission to lords Grey and Grenville.

It may be rash to decide whether lord Moira was the dupe or confederate of the secret cabal, but it is obvious that he was most effectually playing their game.

Sheridan repeated and improved upon the intriguing part which he had played at the commencement of the preceding year. It was industriously circulated abroad that lords Grey and Grenville were made acquainted with the intention of the household to resign as soon as a new ministry should be definitely formed; and that those lords insisted upon its dismissal as a preliminary stipulation, in order to humiliate and enslave the prince. Lord Yarmouth, who held the office of vice-chamberlain, stated in the house of commons, that the officers of

* Mr. Canning's speech, June 11th.

the household were resolved to resign, "at only ten minutes' notice, before certain gentlemen should receive the seals of office," and that he communicated this resolution to Sheridan, for the purpose of its reaching the "certain gentlemen" to whom he alluded. Sheridan, it came out, advised lord Yarmouth not to resign, suppressed lord Yarmouth's communication, and, upon being asked by Mr. Tierney, offered to bet 500 guineas "that no such thing was ever thought of by the household." Confronted with the two principal witnesses, — lord Yarmouth and Mr. Tierney, — in the house of commons, Sheridan gave notice that he should make his defence on a future day. When that day came he was taken ill whilst speaking, and sat down doubly an object of commiseration to the house. He returned to the subject on a subsequent night, sought refuge in self-degrading buffoonery and flimsy generalities, and was from that hour a lost man.

Whatever doubts may be entertained respecting lord Moira, it is obvious that Sheridan was an accomplice, if not the main contriver, behind the curtain. He had his reward, — in neglect, poverty, and a death-bed unexampled for wretchedness and humiliation.

An outcry was raised against lords Grey and Grenville. They were charged by the secret cabal with a design to degrade the regent in the dismissal of his household; — by the neutral party, with having withheld their services in a crisis of public danger, upon a mere point of form; — and by some famished subalterns among the whigs, in their eagerness for place, with having been too inflexible

and exacting. Few can now read the published correspondence, and the disclosures in parliament, without regarding the whole negotiation as a manœuvring contrivance to gain time and exert influence, directed by an intriguing junta behind the throne, whose object was to promote their own interests, screen the capricious apostasy of the regent, and throw the odium of the failure of the negotiations upon lords Grey and Grenville. "I wish," said Sheridan, in one of his unhappy explanations, "the opinion I gave could be published to the world, that it might serve to shame those who now belie me." From the context of this speech he had every advantage of the publication which he desired. No one could mistake his meaning — that he had advised the prince regent not to pronounce sentence of exclusion upon lord Grey: but it is equally obvious that his advice was a Machiavelian suggestion to avoid the inconvenience or odium of direct exclusion when the end could be gained indirectly by intrigue.

It appears somewhat strange, at this distance of time, how it could be supposed for a moment, that lord Grey, with his superior understanding, public principles, and personal character,—with the systematic policy and long reign of George III. unfolded before his eyes,—with the experience of lord Rockingham, of Mr. Fox, and his own,—would commit his reputation in an encounter with not only personal alienation in the highest quarter, but a hostile and rancorous secret cabal, commanding the influence and opportunities of the great offices of the household.

Lord Liverpool completed, rather than strength-

ened, his cabinet, by introducing lord Harrowby as president of the council; Mr. Vansittart as chancellor of the exchequer,—the latter to the surprise of the beholders;—and lord Sidmouth as secretary of state for the home department, which he after some time rendered memorably odious. The man who ascends to the first rank, and falls back to the second, is seldom really qualified even for a secondary place. Lord Sidmouth administered the home department in a time of peril and agitation, which required the exercise of vigorous, sagacious, and moderate counsels. Such have not been his. The statute book, under his auspices, was transiently stained with arbitrary laws, of which the execution was at once imbecile and oppressive, timid and violent.

The ministry having been thus reconstituted, the house of commons, from habitual subserviency, or the fatigue of being independent, or some of those other influences which directly bear upon the calculations of men, surrendered itself to lord Castlereagh for the remainder of the session.

The thread of these court overtures and cabinet negotiations has been followed without interruption to its termination here. It is necessary to recur to some of the leading topics discussed during the same period. In the new arrangement of the king's household, at the commencement of the session, Mr. Perceval proposed, and the house voted, an addition of ten thousand pounds to the annual income of the queen, whose wealth and penury were scandalous and notorious. The discussions or conversations on the subject of the establishments proposed for the

princesses were chiefly remarkable for the disclosure of Mr. Perceval's abandonment of the princess of Wales, and the advocacy of her interests by the opposition. Pressed and provoked respecting his late client, the consistent and moral counsel of the princess reluctantly and faintly declared that "he could not recollect any thing which could be brought as a charge against her royal highness."

Pensions and places were bestowed upon colonel Macmahon with a prodigal favouritism, which gave rise to much discussion within, and dissatisfaction without, the walls of parliament. Colonel Macmahon was a devoted servant of the prince of Wales; but the merit of his services was so entirely personal and private as to give him no claim upon the public purse.

Distress and riot had increased to an alarming and formidable degree among the stocking weavers of Nottingham, and some neighbouring districts, during the preceding winter. The extensive and systematic destruction of machinery, by bodies of men secretly associated and bound by oaths, gave rise to enactments terribly but justifiably severe.

But the most important subject of debate during the session was that of the orders in council, against which Mr. Brougham conducted an enquiry, and arrayed a mass of argument and evidence which led to their virtual or conditional revocation. The chief object of the discussions was the commerce of the country with the United States. At an earlier period this revocation would have satisfied the Americans; but it came too late: six days before it appeared in the London Gazette, the American

government had already declared war with England.

The catholic question was discussed several times directly and collaterally in both houses. It pervaded every discussion relating to changes in the ministry. By far the most important debates upon it were those which took place in the house of commons on the 22d of June, and in the house of lords on the 1st of July, — upon motions made in their respective places by Mr. Canning and lord Wellesley. The catholics, notwithstanding the rejection of their claims, had acted with great moderation, from the hope of better fortune, upon a change of the prince regent's counsels. Seeing a cabinet hostile to emancipation, firmly established in the confidence of the regent and the house of commons, they lost temper and patience. An aggregate catholic meeting, held in Dublin on the 18th of June, passed the following, among other resolutions: — "That from authentic documents now before us, we learn with deep disappointment and anguish, how cruelly the promised boon of catholic freedom has been intercepted by the fatal witchery of an unworthy secret influence, hostile to our fairest hopes, spurning alike the sanctions of public and private virtue, the demands of personal gratitude, and the sacred obligations of political honour."* This embarrassing resolution was received in London on the morning of the day

* The bewitching influence alluded to was not alone avowed, but publicly vindicated in the Courier newspaper, then the acknowledged organ of the ministry, and the especial depository of the social confidence of the household party.

"Perhaps the reproach of favouritism is intended, not

on which Mr. Canning was to submit to the house of commons a resolution, pledging the house to the consideration of the catholic claims early in the following session. He however pressed it ingeniously into the service of his argument: the ministers were divided upon the question, and the motion was carried by a majority of 235 to 106. A similar resolution proposed by lord Wellesley in the house of lords was rejected by a majority of only one. Emancipation was looked upon as decided.

This long and interesting session was prorogued

against ministers, but against private persons, against the marchioness of Hertford, whose influence over the regent is said to be great. Upon this subject we pretend to no information; but taking it for granted, that the marchioness of Hertford does influence, by her advice, the conduct of the regent — what then? Any peer can advise the sovereign, and other persons may, the ministers alone being responsible for the advice, if they act upon it. It was well observed the other day by a morning paper, that the marchioness of Hertford is just as eligible for advising the heads of a party as the duchess of Devonshire, who was held in such veneration for her services to opposition, particularly for keeping the prince of Wales in their interests. Nay, we will go further, and affirm, that whether by mind or education, by pursuits or by habits, by dignity of character, or virtue of conduct, the marchioness of Hertford is far from being the least capable of the two to give good counsel. On this subject, as we said before, we pretend to no information; *but if we are to consider the conduct of affairs as the result of the marchioness of Hertford's advice, we shall most sincerely pray for her as Britain's guardian angel. If it be that lady, who has persuaded the regent to continue in power the servants of his father's choice, and to conduct himself so dutifully as a son, so patriotically as a prince, we hope to hear of his royal highness's visits at Manchester Square every day in the week.*"

by commission on the 30th of July. No want of confidence in ministers could be inferred from the vote on the motion of Mr. Canning. The catholic claims, no longer a cabinet question, were on this occasion supported by lord Castlereagh. But whether from the regent's change of opinion, or the tone of personal attack in the resolution above cited, and the suggestions of those immediately about him, it was determined to dissolve the pledged parliament. The dissolution was most unexpectedly announced on the 20th of September.

The British campaign of 1812 in the Peninsula, signalised only by the victory of Salamanca, and the retreat of Burgos, wants the dramatic interest of the preceding year's campaign. Lord Wellington now contended with marshal Marmont, a captain of the second, or a still lower order, who owed his place in the first rank to an accomplished education, and the good fortune of having been aide-de-camp in Italy and Egypt to general Bonaparte. The British troops occupied the frontier of Portugal, in an attitude which menaced Ciudad Rodrigo, whilst the French were disposed in an extended line from Salamanca to Toledo. Lord Wellington, taking advantage of the want of concentration of the French, and the detachment of two French corps on particular services, invested Ciudad Rodrigo on the 8th, took it by assault on the 19th of January, and was created, by the Spanish cortes, duke of Ciudad Rodrigo, and a grandee of the first class. Having put this place in a state of defence, he re-occupied for a moment his position on the Coa, and invested the stronger place of Badajos on the 16th of March. The garrison

was still commanded by the French general Phillippon, who had distinguished himself by his successful defence of the place in the preceding year. The trenches were opened by the British on the night of the 17th. Part of the works were destroyed by an impetuous sally of the garrison on the 19th. On the morning of the 26th a fort called La Picurina was furiously cannonaded, and taken by storm in the evening. The garrison made a desperate but ineffectual sally to recover it. On the 6th of April the batteries had effected three practicable breaches. At ten at night three columns advanced to the breaches, whilst another division proceeded to escalade a castle to the right, on the Guadiana. The assault at all points was terrible. After two hours' carnage, the castle and the breaches were carried, and the besieged driven in from the outworks. The fighting continued near two hours more in the streets, until general Phillippon, who had retreated into a church with what remained of the garrison, surrendered. The loss was so dreadful on the side of the assailants as to render it doubtful whether the capture was a sufficient compensation. Marshal Soult in the mean time was advancing from Seville, for the relief of Badajos, and already within two days' march, when he received news of its fall. He immediately turned back upon Andalusia, and was pursued and harassed in his rear-guard by a division of British cavalry under sir Stapleton Cotton.

Lord Wellington, having left general Hill on the Guadiana, proceeded with his main army against marshal Marmont, who had crossed the frontier into Beira. Marmont having made a vain demonstration

against Almeida, advanced to Sabugal; but being informed of the movement of Wellington, repassed the Agueda on the 23d of April. Lord Wellington made such dispositions as to encourage the belief that, after a few days' repose in his actual position, he would give battle. Whilst Marmont was engaged in making corresponding dispositions, general Hill was despatched by lord Wellington to attack the strong fort and bridge of Almarez, on the Tagus. General Hill executed this service by a brilliant *coup de main*, and having destroyed the bridge and forts, cut off the communication between Marmont and Soult.

On the 12th of June lord Wellington crossed the Agueda, and encamped on the 16th within two leagues of Salamanca. Marshal Marmont at the same time abandoned Salamanca, moved upon the Douro, and crossed it on the 29th at Tordesillas, where he received a reinforcement, and resumed the offensive.

After various movements and partial affairs, the two main armies, under Wellington and Marmont, came to a general engagement, on the 22d of July, at the heights called the Arapiles, near Salamanca. The time from day-break to one o'clock was occupied in preliminary movements, and partial attacks. Marmont then opened a heavy fire upon the allied front, and the Portuguese gave way. This advantage was followed on the part of Marmont by complicated movements, executed without that unison and vivacity, which would cover their irregularity and complication. A French division separated and committed itself by a rash movement in advance

against the British right. Lord Wellington perceived both errors, and took advantage of them by strengthening his right, and making an impetuous attack. This masterly movement decided the battle, and has obtained the homage of all the French historians of the campaign. Marmont was at the same time so severely wounded by a shell, that the command devolved on general Bonnet. The French left vigorously attacked in its front, and charged and cut up by British cavalry in flank, fell back upon two French divisions of reserve, and communicated to them its own disorder, which soon extended to the centre. At this critical moment, when the whole French army seemed threatened with a rout, Bonnet was also wounded, and the command in chief devolved on general Clausel, who, by a manœuvre of great skill and energy, rallied the French left and centre, upon the right, so as to be enabled to continue to make resistance until nightfall, when the darkness covered his retreat. The loss in killed and wounded was severe on both sides. The French had three generals killed, and four wounded, including among the latter Marmont, Bonnet, and Clausel, who successively commanded in chief. The pursuit of the French was commenced by lord Wellington at day-break on the 23d, and continued for two days, with great loss to the French, from the charges of the British cavalry.

On the 23d the retreating French met the advanced guard of king Joseph, on his way to join Marmont. That general had precipitated the engagement under disadvantages, with the hope of having the honours of victory wholly to himself. His conduct

from the opening of the campaign was regarded by the French generals as a tissue of error and presumption. Clausel retreated through Valladolid upon Burgos. Lord Wellington having continued in hot pursuit of the enemy to Valladolid, which he occupied on the 30th, had his head quarters on the 4th of August at Cuellar,—where he posted a strong detachment to observe the line of the Douro,—arrived at Segovia on the 5th, and marched through the mountain roads, and passes to Madrid.

The Spanish capital was evacuated by king Joseph on the 11th; and entered by lord Wellington, amidst enthusiastic demonstrations of joy, on the 12th of August. The Retiro, fortified and garrisoned by king Joseph, without any comprehensible motive, made a short and faint resistance, and surrendered, with its garrison, artillery, and munitions of war, at discretion. A demand of two millions of piastres by lord Wellington from "the loyal capital" soon cooled its enthusiasm towards its allies and liberators.

The army of Marmont was still disorganised, and that of king Joseph too weak to make head against lord Wellington. Soult saw that nothing short of a concentration of the French armies could compel lord Wellington to fall back upon Portugal, and accordingly raised the siege of Cadiz, with the intention of abandoning Andalusia, on the 25th of August. This event was more important, and created a greater sensation, than even the flight of king Joseph from the capital. The cortes, so long pent up in the Isle of Leon, were now free, and with a wisdom rarely exercised in moments of exultation, conferred on

lord Wellington the command in chief of the Spanish armies. The capture of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajos had raised him from a viscount to an earl; the victory of Salamanca, and occupation of Madrid, made him a marquis.

General Clausel, finding that lord Wellington no longer pursued him, and had bent his course upon Madrid, re-occupied Valladolid on the 19th of August; re-organised his army; was reinforced by general Souham, and sent out a strong detachment, which compelled general Anson to recross the Douro. Lord Wellington, startled by this offensive attitude of an army which he thought wholly incapacitated, left Madrid on the 1st, and arrived at Valladolid on the 5th of September. Clausel again retreated upon Burgos. Souham here took the command in place of Clausel, who was suffering from his wound received at the battle of Salamanca, left a garrison of 1800 or 2000 men in the castle of Burgos, and removed his head quarters to Briviesca.

Lord Wellington had not the necessary battering train for a regular siege; but Burgos was the only depôt which remained to the French army of Portugal, and he determined to attempt the fortress by breaches, mines, assaults, and the magic of his name. After thirty-five days' siege, during which he sprang four mines, made five breaches, and as many assaults, and encountered two vigorous sallies, he abandoned the enterprise, and commenced a retreat, which proved as disastrous as that of sir John Moore, and, by his own account, still more disorderly. Lord Wellington threw away time, and above 2000 men, upon the castle of Burgos, with a vain and fatal per-

tinacity: he found at last the united armies of king Joseph and Soult bearing upon him, the army of Marmont (under Souham) threatening his communications, and nothing left to him but a precipitate escape back to the Douro.

This retreat continued from the 20th of October to the 24th of November, when lord Wellington arrived at his former head-quarters on the frontier of Portugal. The loss was dreadful in men, horses, equipments, and character. Lord Wellington himself branded the want of subordination and discipline as "greater than he had ever witnessed or heard of in any army."—"Outrages," he said, "of all kinds were committed with impunity; the officers no longer exercised any command; and losses were sustained which ought not to have occurred." Among the losses sustained, which ought not to have occurred, was that of his temper by lord Wellington. His general order was resented through the army as an ebullition of his own disappointment, mortified pride, and consciousness of a great error. The failure before such a fortress as that of Burgos was felt by him as a grievous mortification. "La peninsule attentive," says a French writer, "ne vit pas sans étonnement, la fortune du célèbre Wellington échouer devant une bicoque."

Sir Edward Paget, the second in command, was made prisoner during the retreat, whilst riding with only a single orderly through a wood which intervened between two of the retreating columns. Upon being presented to Soult, he said, "Marshal, I am decidedly under the influence of your star: in the retreat from Corunna, when you pursued the British

army, I lost an arm, and to-day I am your prisoner What is reserved for me the third time I know not." Soult received him politely, and sent a flag of truce to the British outposts for his baggage.

King Joseph returned once more to Madrid; Soult, who took the chief command of the combined French armies, established his head-quarters at Toledo, with his right resting on Salamanca; and lord Wellington took up his winter quarters in a strongly protected line upon the frontier. The campaign was now ended.

Whilst the lieutenants of Napoleon were thus engaged with the British in the Peninsula, he pursued in person his ill-starred career of valour, victory, and military genius, from Wilna to Moscow; and at the close of the Spanish campaign was already surrounded with the horrors of his Russian retreat. The leading incidents only need be referred to here. After eighteen months of mutual suspicion, discussion, deception, and warlike preparation, war broke out between Napoleon and Alexander in June, 1812. On the 23d of that month the French emperor crossed the Niemen with 355,000 infantry, 60,000 cavalry, and 1200 pieces of artillery. He began operations with separating, by one of his characteristic manœuvres, the Russian corps of Bagration and Barclay de Tolly; established his head-quarters at Wilna; and proclaimed, too late, that the Poles should be a nation and independent. The Russians, who had abandoned Wilna on his advance, retreated upon the Dwina, were pursued, and on the approach of the French abandoned the imperial head-quarters and entrenched camp of

Drissa on the 18th of July. Marshal Davoust defeated the Russian army of prince Bagration at Mohilow on the 23d. Prince Schwartzenberg, who commanded the Austrian and Saxon auxiliaries, defeated the Russian corps of General Tormasow, at Gorodexna, on the 12th of August. The main French army, under Napoleon, after a few days' repose at Witepsk, advanced upon Smolensk, one of the most considerable towns of the Russian empire, and regarded as the bulwark of Moscow. Barclay de Tolly received positive orders from the emperor Alexander to make a stand here for the defence of Smolensk and of the ancient capital of the empire. The Russians were strongly posted within the town. Napoleon yielding, or pretending to yield, to the impatient valour of his troops, and their battle-cry of "Vive l'Empereur!" took the place by assault, after continued fighting during the afternoon and night of the 17th of August. The Russian general retreated with the loss of 11,000 men. Having established a depôt at Smolensk, the French emperor continued his pursuit of the Russians in their retreat upon Borodino. On the 18th of August, general St. Cyr defeated General Witgenstein at Poltosk, and was created a marshal of France.

The Russian general Kutusow now superseded Barclay de Tolly as commander in chief, and awaited the French at Borodino on the Moskowa. Napoleon called his chief officers round him at three in the morning of the 7th of September, and issued his orders. The first gun was fired at six; and after the heaviest cannonade remembered by the oldest soldiers, through the whole day, the Russians were com-

pletely routed with the loss of 30,000 men, and 60 pieces of artillery. Kutusow had the audacity to proclaim that he had gained a complete victory, and was created a field marshal. *Te Deum* was sung at St. Petersburgh, and *Io triumphe* at London. In England however the truth soon became known.

"Intrepid heroes! Murat, Ney, Poniatowski," said Napoleon at St. Helena, "to you is due the glory of that day. What grand, what noble actions for history to record; how those intrepid cuirassiers forced the redoubts, and sabred the cannoneers at their guns; how Montbrun, Caulaincourt, with heroic devotion, found a glorious death; how our cannoneers, with fewer guns, and uncovered in the plain, returned the fire of covered batteries; how our brave foot, instead of requiring encouragement from their general, at the critical moment, cried, "Be tranquil, your soldiers have sworn to conquer to-day, and they will conquer! Shall some parcels of this glory reach ages to come? or shall lies and calumny prevail?"

Napoleon entered Moscow on the 14th of September, and occupied the Kremlin with the imperial guard. The town was deserted, but afforded excellent quarters for an army. Many inhabitants had left their houses, with the furniture and property undisturbed, and notes addressed to the French officers who might occupy them, soliciting their protection, until the proprietors should return after the first alarm.

On the morning of the 14th, before the French yet entered Moscow, general Rostopchin, the Rus-

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sian governor had caused the imprisoned malefactors of the city to be brought before him, — called them his brothers, — appealed to their patriotism, — and dismissed them with liberty and his instructions.

The French soon perceived the Foundling Hospital on fire. The bank and the bazaar next appeared in flames. Still it was supposed the fire had been accidentally caught from the bivouacs. The French sappers, and some other corps, hastened to extinguish it. They soon abandoned every attempt as hopeless. Rostopchin had caused the fire-engines, which abounded in Moscow, to be destroyed or removed. Troops of incendiaries were seen running wild with sulphurated torches, and applying them in every quarter of the town. Pillage was added to the horrors of conflagration. Moscow soon presented the appearance of one vast and fiercely burning furnace; and, in spite of every effort, continued burning from the 14th to the 21st, when the city was a smouldering ruin. About a thousand of the incendiaries were caught in the fact, tried by a council of war, condemned, and many of them executed.

The burning of Moscow was announced in England as a sacrifice of patriotism. The inhabitants, on the contrary, were kept in ignorance by Rostopchin, with the horrible design of surprising the French in the midst of the flames. The poor who remained in Moscow until the fire began, and the rich who had previously retired, now perished in the woods from cold and hunger, by thousands. More than 20,000 sick and wounded Russian soldiers in the

hospitals were burned to death. About 4000 were saved by the French. This measureless crime was called public spirit in general Rostopchin, and magnanimity in the emperor Alexander; and the English people, forgetting for a moment the national character and their moral feelings, shared the monstrous delusion.

It was too late to continue the campaign, and Napoleon organised a civil and military administration over the ruined city, of which the chief population was his own army. Many of the inhabitants, however, had returned from the direr horrors of famine and the woods. Napoleon made overtures for peace to the emperor Alexander, but without effect. The weather continued unusually mild. It was near the end of October, and there was yet no fall of snow. Napoleon was confirmed by this treachery of the season in the design of passing the winter where he was.

Kutusow teased rather than harassed the French in their cantonments, but at the same time raised new levies, and organised a sort of insurrection among the Russian boors.

The Austrian general, prince Schwartzenberg, made a retrograde movement from Mohilow, which favoured the Russians, and suggested the suspicion to the French that he was already acting in concert with their enemy. Subsistence began to fail at Moscow. The Russians returned to a collision with the corps of Murat and Poniatowski. These movements disenchanted Napoleon of the idea to which he seemed to cling, that the emperor of Russia must make peace. He abandoned Moscow, to fall back upon

his depôt at Smolensk, on the 19th of October, leaving marshal Mortier to cover the retreat of the army and blow up the fortifications of the Kremlin.

The Russian general, Winzingerode, eager to be the first to enter Moscow, forced the French outposts with a cloud of Cossacks; made for the Kremlin; found it occupied by a corps of the young guard; was deserted by the Cossacks, (who, notwithstanding all that has been said of them, have nearly as little courage as discipline,) displayed a white handkerchief as a flag of truce; and was made a prisoner by a French lieutenant of voltigeurs, who significantly asked him whether it was usual for the bearer of a flag of truce to charge the outposts. Marshal Mortier having blown up the works of the Kremlin evacuated Moscow on the 23d.

Kutusow attacked the French under the viceroy of Italy, on the morning of the 24th, at Maloiaroslawetz. This post was taken and retaken several times. An Italian corps under general Pino distinguished itself. Kutusow retreated with the loss of near 10,000 men, killed and wounded. Napoleon pronounced it one of the most brilliant exploits of the campaign, and said to his adopted son in the presence of the army, — "To you, my son, belongs the glory of this day."

Famine began already to threaten the French. They were prevented by the Russians from lateral movements into parts of the country not yet devastated, and the direct line of retreat presented a scene of utter desolation. The rigours of a northern winter were superadded to hunger and the Cossacks. In three nights 30,000 horses perished

of cold, and Napoleon was yet three days' march from his magazines at Smolensk. Unimaginable misery produced disorder and despair, — excepting only where Napoleon appeared. Such was the power of one unit of human life over so many thousands in a situation the most dreadful. Napoleon reached Smolensk, was compelled, by the enemy's movements, famine, and the cold, to abandon it on the 13th, and moved upon the Beresina. Ney, who commanded the rear-guard, and was left at Smolensk, extricated himself from an overwhelming force by one of the most intrepid and skilful achievements in the annals of war.

On the 28th of November the Russians attacked the French at the passage of the Beresina, and obtained their first victory. The passage of the Beresina was the most horribly disastrous incident of the campaign. Tchitchagow was on the right bank, Wittgenstein in communication with him, and Kutusow within three days' march in pursuit. Napoleon hesitated for a moment, but only for a moment, as to the point which he should select for his passage; decided for Weselowo; and, to deceive the enemy as to his intentions, made a grand movement upon Borisow as if for a general engagement. This artifice succeeded in driving off the chief force of the Russians. At day-break on the 26th of November, some Polish cavalry and French voltigeurs swam across and drove back the Russian outposts. Two bridges were built under the immediate direction of Napoleon. For several hours the sappers and engineers worked in the water amid fragments of ice. The passage of the troops began

at four in the afternoon, and continued through the whole night. The morning of the 27th broke upon a varied and most dreadful spectacle of human suffering. One of the bridges broke down irreparably; horses, carriages, and artillery pushed in confusion upon the remaining bridge, already choked with the passing infantry. The enemies' guns began to play upon the bridge and the approaches to it. Discipline, humanity, all gave way in the desperate struggle for self-preservation. Not only men, but women and children—the wives and children of French artisans who had fled from Moscow with the army,—were crushed to death, horribly mutilated, or plunged into the Beresina. Nothing was heard but the vociferations of rage, the wailings of despair, and the shrill cries of physical agony. "The voice of the emperor himself," says an eyewitness, "would not have been heard at that moment." The Russians were pressing on. Before the extreme rear and isolated stragglers had yet passed, the bridge was set on fire, to prevent pursuit; and, charged still with human creatures, it descended, with a horrid crash and still more horrid cry, to the bottom of the Beresina. The French lost 7000 killed or wounded; 15,000 prisoners; artillery and baggage in a still greater proportion, and what was more fatal, their courage and organisation as an army.

The French cavalry, or rather the wreck of it, was without horses. Those officers who had horses left were formed into an escort for the emperor, and called the sacred squadron. Generals acted as captains, colonels as subalterns, and the

inferior officers as privates. It was commanded by Grouchy, under the orders of Murat.

On the 5th of December the head-quarters of Napoleon were at the village of Smorgoni, within two days' march of Wilna. Here the opinion of his lieutenants and his own decided him to return immediately to France, whence he could best relieve the army and overawe Europe. He set out in a sledge, without an escort, leaving the command in chief to Murat.

The departure of the emperor extinguished what remained of hope or courage. The defection of the Prussian general, Yorck, who capitulated separately with the Russians, added to the difficulties of retreat. Murat entered Wilna on the 9th, and evacuated it on the 10th, leaving behind him above 15,000 sick and wounded, including many officers. He was unequal to his difficult situation. His abandonment of Wilna, which Napoleon frequently lamented *, completed the ruin of the army.

The 29th bulletin, of what was still called in tragic mockery "the grand army," describes the retreat during the month of November in an unreserved desponding tone, which produced in France

If Napoleon had remained, or left the command with prince Eugene, Wilna had never been abandoned. There was a corps of reserve at Warsaw, another at Koningsberg; but the presence of some Cossacks caused Wilna to be evacuated in disorder and in the night. Napoleon could not, in every great crisis, be at Paris and with the army. Nothing was less expected by him, than the infatuated conduct at Wilna. The disasters of the army commenced from that day. —*Mém. de Nap.*

emotions of surprise and despair. "Those men," it says,—"whom nature does not endow with strength sufficient to be above all the chances of fate and fortune were seen to give way, they lost their gaiety and good humour: those whom she creates superior to every thing preserved their gaiety and usual demeanour, and saw fresh glory in the difficulties to be surmounted." As a composition this bulletin may rank with Xenophon's "retreat of the ten thousand," in the deep interest of distress and even in simplicity of style. It would seem as if the habitual style of Napoleon had left him with his fortune. He reached Paris on the night of the 18th of December, assuredly to the great joy of France.

Napoleon's invasion of Russia is, perhaps, the most historic calamity in the annals of modern war. It has been variously canvassed and condemned as a signal error in political and military science. He has a right to be heard in his own person,—and, addressing the world and posterity, at St. Helena, beyond the reach of hope or fear, he has a right to be believed. "The world," says he, "will never know the history of the Russian campaign, because the Russians do not write, or write without any respect for truth, and the French have taken it into their heads to discredit their own glory. The war of Russia became a necessary consequence of the continental system, from the day Alexander violated the conventions of Tilsit and Erfurth: but Napoleon was determined by a still higher consideration. The French empire, which he had created by so many victories, would

infallibly be dismembered at his death, and the sceptre of Europe would pass into the hands of a czar, unless he threw back the Russians beyond the Borysthenes, and restored the throne of Poland, the natural barrier of his empire. In 1812, Austria, Prussia, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, marched under the French eagles. Should not Napoleon regard the moment arrived for consolidating the immense edifice which he had raised, but upon which Russia must press with the whole weight of her power so long as she could carry at pleasure her numerous armies on the Oder? Alexander was young as his empire; and would, it was to be presumed, survive Napoleon. Behold the whole secret of that war." "It is not true," he continues, "that the Russians retreated voluntarily to draw the French army into the interior of their country. They abandoned Wilna because they could not concentrate their armies there. They wished to rally in their intrenched camp at Drissa on the Dwina, but the march of the prince of Eckmuhl had separated the armies of Barclay de Tolly and Bagration; and that fine manœuvre of Napoleon, which is the pendant of that of Landshut, in 1809, turned their left in their march on Witepsk, and gained Smolensk by 24 hours' advance." "The Russians," he adds, "had no plan of a campaign at all." In answer to the reproach of having neglected the means of rallying and re-organising his army by reserves and magazines, in case of a reverse, he says, "The army had four lines of fortified places, — on the Rhine, the Elbe, the Vistula, and the Niemen. Smolensk was made the pivot of the march on Moscow, and con-

tained hospitals, ammunition, and supplies: 240,000 men were left between the Vistula and the Borysthenes; 160,000 only passed Smolensk; and 100,000 only entered Moscow."

Hence it would appear that the bases upon which he operated were as well calculated, and secured with as much foresight, as his movements in advance were executed with boldness and rapidity.

CHAP. XIX.

1812, 1813.

NEW PARLIAMENT. — COMPLAINTS OF THE PRINCESS OF WALES. — CATHOLIC QUESTION. — RENEWAL OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY'S CHARTER. — WAR IN GERMANY — AND IN THE PENINSULA.

PARLIAMENT was dissolved to get rid of its pledge to the catholics. Ministers pressed religious intolerance and the passions of the clergy into their service during the elections, and had with them also the war party of country gentlemen, capitalists, and government contractors. The new parliament was opened on the 30th of November, by the regent in person. It was the first time of his performing this duty, which, for the preceding eight years, had been executed by commission. The house of lords never was, and in fact never could have been, more crowded. The regent's gorgeous robes and forest of plumes did not conceal his corpulency and the coarseness of his countenance, — and he read the speech with little of the dignity or grace of delivery for which he was famed, in a bass voice, which had the unbending harshness of age. Those to whom it was his first representation, — if that alien but expressive term be allowable, — and whose fancy

associated with the prince of Wales the accomplishments of manner and enunciation, were disappointed.

The speech embraced a variety of topics, of which the most prominent was the war in the Peninsula, in the north of Europe, and with the United States of America. The address, as usual, but echoed the speech. Lord Wellesley having panegyrised his brother, in violation of that essential grace of eulogy, good taste, complained that lord Wellington had not been adequately supported by ministers. Lord Liverpool returned the complete answer that every requisition made by lord Wellington had been complied with. The obvious aim of lord Wellesley was to shift upon ministers the blame of the evacuation of Madrid and retreat of Burgos,—and he failed. Lord Grenville, with more reason, condemned the war with America, which it was then difficult to terminate, but which might have been avoided by a timely revocation of the orders in council.

The American war was scarcely heard or thought of at the time, amid the din of battle and the shock of armies and empires in Europe. It will suffice to say, that the Americans, entertaining designs upon Canada, and giving loose to their naval enterprise and cupidity, with the prospect of making prizes, entered eagerly into a war with England; that in Canada they were ignominiously beaten, and that they had a decided advantage at sea, in some brilliant engagements between single ships.

The address in the house of lords was carried without amendment or division. Mr. Whitbread proposed a pacific amendment in the house of

commons, upon which he did not divide the house.

One of the earliest topics discussed was the bullion question. Before the appointment of the bullion committee, gold had risen from 3*l.* 17*s.* 10*d.* to 4*l.* 10*s.* the ounce, and since the appointment of the committee, to 5*l.* 5*s.*; — in other words, the bank paper was depreciated 35 per cent, — or again, all classes were mulcted to this amount in their property, the bank alone excepted. Yet did the house of commons re-assert Mr. Vansittart's resolution of the preceding year, that guineas and bank notes were considered equivalent in public estimation! Were this resolution founded in any selfish motive of individual or party speculation, the conduct of ministers and their supporters would have been profligate. But they had brought themselves to think that the safety of the kingdom depended upon continuing the war; — without this resolution, embodied in a law, the war could not be carried on, — and they belied their knowledge by a pious fraud, for the good of their country.

Private subscriptions to a large amount had been contributed for the relief of the "Russian sufferers." On the 17th of December, a message was brought down from the prince regent, recommending a grant for their relief. It is a curious fact, that whilst lord Liverpool, lord Castlereagh, and Mr. Wilberforce were eulogising the heroic patriotism which had set fire to Moscow, the credit of that deed was given to "the impious French," and the vengeance of God invoked upon them in the gazette of St. Petersburgh.

Parliament adjourned over the Christmas holidays to the 2d of February. On the 8th lord Castlereagh presented to the house of commons various papers, with a declaration of the prince regent relative to the American war, and on the 18th moved a resolution pledging the house to support the prince regent in every measure necessary for prosecuting it with vigour, and bringing it to a safe and honourable termination. The main points in dispute between the two belligerents proved to be the right of search, and the impressment of British seamen, real or alleged, on board American ships. The resolution was observed upon rather than opposed.

The princess Charlotte of Wales was now approaching her eighteenth year — the full age of sovereignty. The king's illness had on two occasions caused a suspension of the executive power, and created anomaly, inconvenience, and danger to the state. Sir Francis Burdett brought this important subject before the house. He moved generally for leave to bring in a bill to provide for any interruption of the exercise of the royal authority; but stated in his speech that his object was to provide, that in case of the death or disability of the prince regent the powers now exercised by him should devolve without restriction upon the heir to the throne, the princess Charlotte of Wales. The motion was opposed by ministers on the ground of the remoteness of the contingency, and the propriety of leaving the discretion of parliament unfettered. The real motive was not avowed. The prince regent had a nervous dislike of any discussion or arrangement in the contemplation of his death; and "the discretion

of parliament" left an open field for the intrigues and cabals. of party and the court. The motion was supported by the whig opposition, but rejected by a sweeping majority of 238 to 73.

The approach of the princess Charlotte to the age at which she should be introduced formally at court and to the world, led to other discussions which excited a much livelier and more general sensation. The princess of Wales was restricted in her opportunities of seeing her daughter. Under pretence of ill health and her education, the young princess was removed from Warwick House to Windsor. Here she could not be seen by her mother without the queen's permission, which was twice refused. The queen, with the decorous hypocrisy of a court, referred the princess to the authority of the prince regent, and his express orders that his daughter should not be interrupted in her studies. The princess addressed a letter to the regent, and the old game of disputes and partisanship, ignoble details, and base passions, was renewed.

The restrictions imposed on the intercourse between the mother and daughter by the prince regent arose from political motives, which his ministers shared, as well as from his hatred of his wife. Deserted by Mr. Perceval and lord Eldon, she had thrown herself into the arms of some members of the opposition, in whose favour it was natural to suppose she would influence the mind of her daughter.

With the advice and assistance of her new counsellors, the princess addressed to her husband, on the 14th of January, a letter, in which maternal tender-

ness and the sentiments of an exemplary wife are put forward with the studied artifices of advocacy and declamation. It was returned with the seal unbroken. The prince had no temptation even of curiosity to see the contents. It had been transmitted with an open copy through the hands of lords Liverpool and Eldon. After the royal missive had been three times passed backwards and forwards between the princess and the regent, through the medium of lady Anne Hamilton and lord Liverpool, the latter, pressed by the princess, acquainted her that the copy of her letter had been read to the prince regent, and that he had not been pleased to express his pleasure thereon.

Whilst this correspondence, if it can be so called, was pending, arrangements were made for presenting the young princess at court on the queen's birthday. The princess of Wales and her daughter were dressed for the drawing-room, on the supposition that the latter should be presented by her mother. An intimation was given that the presentation was to be made by the duchess of York. The young princess declared that she would be presented by her mother, or not at all. Her wish was not complied with, and the presentation did not take place.

About the middle of February, the princess of Wales conveyed, through lord Liverpool, her wish to see the princess Charlotte, and was informed that the young princess should visit her on a particular day at Kensington palace. When the day came, the visit did not take place; the mother remonstrated; and lord Liverpool informed her in reply, that the princess Charlotte was forbidden to visit her mother

in consequence of the recent publication of the princess's letter to the regent in the newspapers. The princess had complained in the letter of being treated "as if she were still more culpable than the perjuries of her suborned traducers represented her." The ambiguous use of the words "suborned traducers," which seemed to convey an insinuation against the prince, gave great offence at Carlton House; and the question of the degree of intercourse which should exist between the mother and daughter was submitted to the privy council. An assemblage of right reverend and right honourable lords and gentlemen reported its opinion, that the intercourse between the princess of Wales and the princess Charlotte should be subject to regulation and restraint. Upon this the princess addressed to the speaker a letter, which she desired should be read to the house. She threw herself upon the wisdom of parliament, and desired to be treated as innocent, or proved guilty. The reading of the letter was followed by a dead silence.

Mr. Whitbread, from a sense of justice, or the vanity of being adviser to a princess,—in either case with perfect disinterestedness of motive,—espoused her cause, and soon became one of her intimate counsellors. He was the first who rose after the letter was read. The subject, he said, was one which could not end there, and he desired to know the intentions of lord Castlereagh. That minister suggested delay until a motion, of which notice had been given, should come before the house. The notice of a motion respecting the princess of Wales had been given by Mr. Cochrane

Johnstone, a speculating jobber in politics and stocks, who afterwards became more notorious. It stood for the 4th of May. The scandalous mysteries of "The delicate Investigation," and "The Book," were as yet known only to the initiated few. Public curiosity was wrought to the highest pitch. The bar, the gallery, and the avenues of the house of commons were crowded in expectation of disclosures. The speaker (Abbot), with his precise solemnity of voice and manner, pronounced the name of "Mr. Cochrane Johnstone." The throb of expectant curiosity began—and was disappointed. Mr. Lygon rose and moved the standing order for the exclusion of strangers; upon which the crowd in the gallery, the noblemen behind the bar, and the noble ladies who listened through the ventilator above, very unwillingly retired. Mr. Cochrane Johnstone, thus deprived of an audience, and of the echo of the newspapers, said he should not proceed, and the matter ended for that day.

Next day, Mr. Cochrane Johnstone again rose in his place, and had no sooner declared his object than Mr. Lygon again moved the exclusion of strangers. He however, proceeded, and concluded a long speech with moving an address to the prince regent for copies of the report of the commissioners of enquiry into the conduct of the princess of Wales made in 1806, with copies of all other papers "annexed or relating thereto." It was obvious, from Mr. Cochrane Johnstone's specification of documents, some of which he read to the house, that he had the mysterious volume in his hands. He also complained that a prosecution for perjury had not been instituted

against lady Douglas, who, with her husband, still persisted in their accusation. Lord Castlereagh replied at great length. His speech, more than usually rambling, and full of repetition, amounted to this, — that there was no doubt respecting the succession, and therefore no case for the house; and that if lady Douglas had not been prosecuted, it arose from legal difficulties in the way of a conviction. He vindicated his own consistency by the adventurous assertion that the minute of 1807 only proceeded upon the report of the whig lords in 1806; said that the minute merely declared the absence of all *legal* evidence of guilt; and added, that at the moment when he was then speaking, he meant to express no opinion of the guilt or innocence of the princess of Wales. Sir Samuel Romilly, who was solicitor-general in 1806, and took down the evidence given before the commission in that year, vindicated the legality and uprightness of the tribunal, — which in truth hardly needed vindication. Mr. Whitbread objected to so much of the resolutions as called for disclosures which, he said, would only gratify the taste for scandal; — exposed the inconsistency of lords Castlereagh and Eldon, who, as cabinet ministers in 1807, had recorded their opinion of the innocence of the princess's conduct and propriety of her demeanour by a minute of council; and yet, upon the very same evidence, as privy councillors in 1813, declared her unfit to have unrestricted intercourse with her daughter; — cited the parallel case of Anne Boleyn, and her prayer, "let me receive an open trial, for my truth shall fear no open shame;"—and concluded a speech of great energy and

feeling with moving an amendment, confined to the production of the report to which the princess had alluded in her letter. Lord Castlereagh, who could be energetic, and almost eloquent, when he was personally stung, replied to the speech of Mr. Whitbread warmly, and with effect. He characterised the letter, to which the princess had, he said, merely put her name, as calculated to involve the young princess in domestic feuds, and sow division and jealousy between the father and child,—as an appeal to the country against the prince, whom it charged indirectly with subornation,—and as an appeal to the daughter against the parent. He then exposed, with just contempt, a canting paragraph in the letter about the confirmation of the princess, which had in point of fact been delayed only in compliance with the expressed desire of the king. Mr. Stuart Wortley disapproved of both the original motion and amendment, but concluded his speech with severe strictures on the conduct of the prince of Wales, — declaring that " we had a royal family which took no warning from what was said or thought about them, and seemed to be the only persons in the country who were wholly regardless of their own welfare and respectability."

It was insinuated by lord Castlereagh in the course of his speech, that the opposition were the secret movers of those proceedings of the princess. Mr. Ponsonby repelled the insinuation indignantly; declared that he should despise those who made the family quarrels of the prince and princess a stepping-stone to office; that he had never done so; but that he could not say as much for the living and the

dead. This allusion to the intrigues of Mr. Perceval and his colleagues passed without reply: his amendment was withdrawn by Mr. Whitbread; and the original motion was negatived without a division.

Soon after this discussion, the whole evidence against the princess of Wales, in all its scandalous and disgusting details, was disgorged upon the public, through the medium of two morning newspapers, known to be especially patronised at Carlton House. On the 15th of March, Mr. Whitbread, after expressing himself indignantly respecting the shameful publications which had recently taken place, in newspapers known to be under the control of ministers, and patronised in the highest quarter, asked two questions, — Whether instructions had been given to prosecute lady Douglas for perjury? and whether lady Douglas had not been examined in the presence of her husband, between the 13th of February and 5th of March? Lord Castlereagh declined answering until some specific proceeding was stated to the house. In the course of the conversation which followed, lord Milton expressed himself warmly, and remarkably, respecting the disclosure of the evidence. He would, he said, "advise persons in high situations to be aware how they trifled with the feelings of the public. Let them reflect seriously upon what they were doing. Let them take care not to be suspected; since it was known through what publications it was that such matters of information were ushered to the world. It must be supposed that these things were not brought under the public eye, through such channels, contrary to the wishes and

will of persons in high places." "I charge," said he, "upon the publishers, the advisers of the publication, and the consenters thereto, the offence of instilling into the public mind poisons of the rankest description. Can they be called documents fit for the public at large to peruse? Are they fit to be laid before our wives and daughters? I speak on this subject with warm feelings,—I speak upon it as an Englishman!"

On the 17th of March, Mr. Whitbread said he held in his hand a petition from sir John and lady Douglas, offering to re-swear their depositions in such form as to render them amenable, if they swore falsely, to a prosecution to conviction for perjury. It was further stated by Mr. Whitbread, that sir John Douglas informed him that lady Douglas had been examined as a credible witness by the treasury solicitor and a magistrate, at the very time when she was stigmatised as a perjured witness (but screened technically from conviction) by lord Castlereagh, in the house of commons;—that sir John Douglas called on lord Castlereagh to complain of the imputation on his wife at the moment when she was so examined;—that lord Castlereagh replied he knew nothing of such examination,—and that sir John Douglas rejoined, "then if your lordship does not, the lord chancellor does." Sir John Douglas, Mr. Whitbread further stated, declared that he would have redress, *that he knew more, and his wife knew more, than they had disclosed, and the public should know all since they were so wronged.* He then contrasted the professed ignorance of lord Castlereagh, with the reference of sir John Douglas to the chancellor;

asked whether the prince regent was directed by secret advisers; said that spies and emissaries were still employed to rake up matter of accusation against the princess; complained that the evidence of Mrs. Lisle in 1806 had been garbled by the omission of the questions and by giving only the answers; produced a copy of the questions and and answers placed in his hands by Mrs. Lisle herself; and concluded with moving "an address to the prince regent, expressing the indignation with which the house beheld publications so insulting to the royal family, and so offensive to public decency and morals, and requesting his royal highness to direct the prosecution of all persons concerned in committing, or procuring to be committed, so high an offence."

Some altercation and explanation took place between Mr. Whitbread and lord Castlereagh, respecting an assertion of lord Castlereagh, that Mr. Whitbread had made an illiberal and unfair personal attack on the prince.

Mr. Tierney, declared in the course of his observations that the royal family of England was falling into contempt, and moved as an amendment, that the printers and publishers of the two offending papers should be asked, at the bar of the house, by whose authority they had published, and from whom they had received, the depositions.

Mr. Canning expressed himself in such a manner as to set his moral feeling as much above the puritanism of Mr. Perceval, as it set his candour in reference to the princess and the minute of council in 1807, above the casuistry of lord Castlereagh. He

had, he said, "always disapproved of the printing of the book. When he first received a copy from Mr. Perceval, he sent him the following note:—'I have received your book: I am sorry it has appeared: it will certainly come out some time or other; and that you may know that it is not from my copy, I return you the one you have sent me.' He thought it a vain endeavour for any ministers to think of removing dislikes, or doing away with personal prejudices; but he thought that some such arrangements might have been made as would have preserved the public feelings and public decency from being shocked; and he conceived that ministers must have been highly culpable if, after the restrictions were taken off, they had made no such effort." Mr. Canning concluded by expressing his hope "that a speedy and satisfactory termination would be put to the discussions on this subject; discussions which threw the public into a state of agitation,—which were tainting the minds and morals of the present generation, and conveying a legacy of impurity to posterity."

Mr. Whitbread withdrew his motion, and the amendment was negatived.

The complaint of Mr. Whitbread respecting the evidence of Mrs. Lisle in 1806 created a great sensation. It so happened that on the day of her examination, sir Samuel Romilly was absent, and lord Ellenborough held the pen in his place. On the 22d of March, lord Ellenborough repelled the imputation of unfairness with great violence, and declared it "false as hell." This expression was much canvassed as unbecoming the chief justice of

England. But it loses much of its coarseness on the probable supposition that lord Ellenborough used it as Shakspeare's. The conduct of Mr. Whitbread was indiscreet, and the violence of lord Ellenborough pardonable. Few persons could have been so little conversant with published examinations as not to know that the answers were always taken down in the language of the questions put, and not as the language or suggestions of the witness. Lord Ellenborough, who but followed the invariable usage of the judges in the courts, read over her evidence to Mrs. Lisle, and made any alterations suggested by her. The other commissioners of 1806, lords Erskine, Grenville, and Spencer, joined lord Ellenborough in vindicating his conduct and their own, and in asserting most truly, the fairness of the proceedings.

It came out, among the disclosures of the "delicate investigation," that lord Moira had privately examined some persons as witnesses respecting the conduct of the princess. The imputation of suborning, conveyed in the letter of the princess to the regent, was pointed in the newspapers from the prince to his lordship. Lord Moira said he rose, whilst vindications engaged the attention of the house, to vindicate himself from a calumny. He declared on the faith and honour of a gentleman, that he had never spontaneously sought, nor been instigated to seek, evidence against the princess; but, as a counsellor of the prince of Wales, he considered himself bound by his oath, when evidence was offered on a matter of the deepest concern to the honour of the individual and to the state, to enter into an examination of it.

His explanation scarcely satisfied the public. A letter, addressed by him to a member of the grand lodge of masons, and published in the newspapers, appeared to inculpate the princess. Lord Moira was at the time on the eve of sailing for India. The friends of the princess were loud in their complaints; and Mr. Whitbread moved, on the 31st of March, that permission should be asked of the house of peers, to examine lord Moira relative to two points in his letter. The proceeding was rejected as informal; but led to a correspondence between lord Moira and Mr. Whitbread, in which the former explained the doubtful expressions in his letter, so as to negative any imputation on the princess of Wales.

Unbounded liberality in the use of his fortune, gallantry as a soldier, high breeding as a gentleman, a certain personal *éclat* as the friend of his country and his prince,—as a courtier and a patriot,—one of the rarest combinations in the world,—had obtained lord Moira so high a reputation for public and private honour, that he was designated by the conventional epithet "chivalrous" in the newspapers of the day. But the curse of Carlton House was on him. He wasted his fortune in his master's service to the humiliating extremities of distress. The friend of Ireland and of catholic emancipation, he sacrificed his country and his principles to the gratification of a prince; and lent himself to the triumph of a hostile party. As a private gentleman he stained himself by performing an equivocal office in a revolting investigation; and he, too, like Sheridan, had his reward. After a splendid exile of several years in India, he

was left to die a petty colonial governor on a rock in the Mediterranean.

These unhappy domestic quarrels did not again engage the attention of parliament during the session. There was obviously a design to degrade the princess of Wales to a condition below the rank of consort of the sovereign, if not wholly to deprive her of it. But the manly feelings of the people rallied round her, as an unprotected, persecuted woman and a stranger. Addresses and resolutions expressed in strong language of censure and indignation were agreed to in London, Westminster, and Middlesex — and the restrictions upon her intercourse with her daughter were relaxed.

Two questions, of little novelty but great permanent importance, were discussed under somewhat new circumstances, in the course of the session. Mr. Grattan moved, on the 25th of February, a committee of the whole house on the catholic claims. Opinion on this subject was never before so curiously balanced; both parties counted, with equal confidence, upon triumphant majorities. The friends of the measure felt strong in the moral effect of the pledge of the last parliament, the division and liberty of opinion in the cabinet, and the policy and justice of the cause. Its opponents were equally confident in the more compact force of party throughout the country on their side; the hollowness of those who supported, and the rancorous sincerity of those who opposed, emancipation in the cabinet; and the personal feelings of the regent, which were well known. Mr. Grattan, now advanced in years, and going for the 20th time over ground

which had been for a quarter of a century the highway of parliamentary debate, spoke at great length, with untired energy, unexhausted resources, the fresh feelings and sanguine generosity of youth, the experienced wisdom and authority of age. The debate was continued through four fatiguing adjournments, with little of novelty or relief, excepting only from a speech in which the powers of a superior reason, expert dialectics, and the fire of legitimate eloquence were displayed by lord Plunket, the present chancellor of Ireland, then a member of the house of commons. The motion was carried, at five in the morning of the 5th day, by a majority of 264 to 224.

The house went into a committee on the 9th of March. Mr. Grattan moved two preliminary and general resolutions. The speaker, who after leaving the chair took his seat on the treasury bench, was the first who opposed them. He declared himself not adverse to concession, and gave the standard of his liberality by stating, as an instance, his willingness to allow catholic soldiers the free exercise of their religious worship in England, as in Ireland. Mr. Ponsonby replied to him. After several other speeches the resolutions were carried by 186 to 119. On the 30th of April Mr. Grattan appeared at the bar; there was an unusually full attendance, and all eyes were turned towards him, when the speaker asked with more than his usual pomp, "Mr. Grattan, what have you got there?" "A bill, sir," replied the veteran patriot, with his indescribable peculiarity of intonation overcharged by the half triumphant, half nervous sense of the situation in which he stood, and pacing up to the table with his accustomed

strides, in trooper-like boots, and a brass-buttoned frock-coat,—the very figure of a veteran campaigner; —at once venerable and grotesque. The first reading of a bill, by established parliamentary usage, passes *sub silentio*. In this instance the question in the affirmative was answered by a vigorous cry of "ay," and in the negative by a still louder and heartier "no." The speaker, however, decided for the affirmative, and the bill was ordered to be read a second time on the 11th of May.

The second reading having been moved on that day, sir J. Cox Hippesley moved a previous enquiry, so vast and various in its extent and details, that, with the best disposition on the part of the house of commons, the consideration of the catholic claims must have been postponed by it for a generation, if not for a century. The select committee which he proposed to charge with the enquiry would have had to make the tour of the Christian world, protestant and catholic, and ascertain the doctrine, discipline, and political relations of the Roman catholic clergy. The respectable mover was an old gentleman singularly erudite in the lore of canons and councils, from having resided and disputed abroad in catholic countries, and was imbued with the vanity as well as learning of the dogmatic theologians. He was friendly to the catholic claims, but conceiving that he had been slighted by the framers of the bill, he took this mode of avenging himself. The opponents of the measure cheered his speech, supported his motion, praised his erudition, and laughed at his simplicity. The proposition, after having drawn from Mr. Canning

an unrivalled display of wit, ridicule, and pleasantry, was rejected by a majority of 235 to 189. The second reading could not take place that night, and three days were gained for intrigue and influence. The bill was read a second time on the 11th, and committed on the 14th of May. It underwent in the committee considerable alteration, chiefly with a view to satisfy the doubts or fears of protestants. The opposing party were resolved to make a final stand on the 24th of May. The house having resolved itself into a committee, the speaker was again the first who rose. He concluded an elaborate speech with moving the omission of the clause which opened the two houses of parliament to catholics. After a long discussion, his motion was carried by a majority of four. Mr. Ponsonby immediately announced that the bill, without this clause, was unworthy the acceptance of the catholics, or the support of their friends, and was therefore abandoned.

This result was ascribed to the speaker's speech. The speech may be found in the parliamentary debates, with every advantage of being not only corrected, but composed by himself. There is nothing in it to account for a great impression on a deliberative assembly. His pompous manner, precise language, habitual authority, and imposing costume, may have had an effect upon a certain class of minds. Stripped of these, and judged by the reader of his speech, lord Colchester appears but a captious sophist or puny rhetorician.

The second subject of importance which engaged parliament was the expiration and renewal of the

charter of the East India company. Petitions from the outports of the United Kingdom demanded the opening of the trade. Evidence was taken before both houses, and the extent and conditions of the new charter discussed at great length. The company made strenuous efforts to keep its monopoly, and when that failed, to make the best terms with the government. Mr. Charles Grant, who had not been long a member of the house, distinguished himself by a speech of the highest order of eloquence, on the side of the company. In the result the trade with China was continued exclusively to the company; and that with India opened to the United Kingdom, subject to certain conditions.

Parliament was prorogued by the prince regent in person on the 22d of July. The occasion was distinguished by an unusual, unauthorised, and presumptuous reference to the rejection of the catholic claims made by the speaker at the bar.* The regent's speech turned chiefly upon the events and prospects of the war in the peninsula and the north of Europe.

In December, 1812, it has been stated, the skeleton of the French grand army fell back upon the Vistula under the command of Murat. That prince, who was brave and capable in a subordinate place, exercised his supreme command with disastrous incapacity, and threw it up without orders on the 18th of January, to return to Naples. The vacant command was assumed by prince Eugene Beauharnois, in compliance with the decision of a council

* A resolution of censure upon this sally of the speaker was moved by lord Morpeth in the succeeding session.

of marshals. Pressed by the Russians, he soon abandoned the line of the Vistula.

The defection of the German states now began. Great influence has been ascribed to a secret association throughout Germany, called the *Tugend-Bund*, or band of virtue. Its great object, at this time, was to nationalise the spirit of hostility to the French. Its principles were as yet more feudal than liberal; it made the Teutonic manners of the middle age the fashion in German politics as in German literature,—some of the younger and more enthusiastic members even reviving the ancient costume;—and it was encouraged by the ruling powers of Germany in their very armies. The example of defection was set by the king of Prussia, who seems to have been reduced by a sort of fatal necessity to an habitual system of temporising and falsehood. In the month of March, he proclaimed a treaty with Russia, which he had denied in February; sanctioned the defection of general d'Yorck, which he had branded as a crime; and declared war against France.

Napoleon left Paris on the 15th of April, arrived at Mentz on the 17th, took the command of the army and immediately began the campaign of 1813. The emperor of Russia and the king of Prussia were also with their armies, holding nominally the chief command. General Wittgenstein, who had succeeded as Russian commander in chief on the death of Kutusow, directed the operations of the combined forces of Russia and Prussia. Napoleon advanced towards Leipsic, whilst the viceroy crossed the Saal at Merseburg, with the intention of forming a junc-

tion with him. The first collision between Napoleon, and the allies, consisting of the force under general Winzingerode, was at Weissenfels on the 1st of May. The loss on either side was inconsiderable, with the exception of the death of marshal Bessieres, duke of Istria, killed whilst making a reconnoissance. He was the favourite pupil of Napoleon, and commanded the cavalry of the imperial guard.

On the morning of the 2d of May, the two main armies were confronted in order of battle, near the plain of Lutzen, celebrated as the field in which Gustavus Adolphus fell. The allies directed by Wittgenstein were the assailants. The emperor of Russia and king of Prussia looked on from a height in the rear, occupied by the reserves. Blucher and Ney commanded respectively in the first line, and commenced the engagement with a furious onset. The village of Gross-Gorschen, after being bravely disputed, was yielded to the allies. Encouraged by this success, Wittgenstein ordered up the Prussian reserve, and took Kaya, the key of the French position which covered Lutzen, and commanded the great road to Leipsic. Napoleon ordered his aide-de-camp, count Lobau, to attack it with a division of the French reserve, and the Prussians were dislodged. A fresh reserve, sent by Wittgenstein, enabled them to recover Kaya, and throw some French battalions into disorder. Napoleon saw the critical moment and ordered up his last stake. Sixteen battalions of the young guard advanced upon Kaya, at the *pas de charge*; and the old guard moved *en échelons*, covered by cavalry, and a battery of 80 pieces of

artillery. This attack was decisive: the allies were driven back, but continued to fight whilst they retrograded, until night separated the combatants.

A great proportion of the French army consisted of conscripts then engaged for the first time. Napoleon, to encourage them, exposed himself frequently during the action in the thick of the fire. The loss of the French was 10,000, that of the allies 15,000, in killed, wounded, and prisoners. The latter retreated across the Elster, and were pursued by the French along the road to Dresden.

This victory re-established, in some degree, the reputation of the French arms. The king of Saxony was escorted by Napoleon to his capital in triumph. The allies retired upon Bautzen, where, after several affairs of separate corps, they concentrated their forces for a general battle. Napoleon, whose army now exceeded 100,000 combatants under his immediate command, continued his pursuit of the allies; and becoming the assailant in his turn, made preparations of attack on the morning of the 20th of May. The cannonade was opened on both sides at twelve; and at eight o'clock the French, having forced the positions of the allies on their left, and occupied both banks of the Spree, had gained the battle of Bautzen.

It was but a prelude to the battle of Wurtchen, which Napoleon commenced at five next morning. The emperor Alexander is said to have directed in person the movements of the allies. The expertness and genius of a great captain are said to have been signally displayed in this action by Napoleon. The movements and combinations were too various

and complicated to be stated in detail. Napoleon appears indebted for his victory to the success with which he misled the allies by feint movements, and masked his chief attack. The loss of the French was 12,000, that of the allies 21,000, *hors de combat*. In this engagement the Prussians were again the most exposed and the chief sufferers. Napoleon pursued the allies at four on the following morning. A partial engagement took place at Reichenbach, in which marshal Duroc, duke of Friuli, was killed by a random cannon shot at its close; and Napoleon lost, in the course of this short campaign, another early companion in arms. There was something ominous in seeing two of his dearest and most devoted friends struck by his side within so short a space, and it is said to have been regarded by him as the precursor of his own approaching fate. With all his genius he did not "defy augury."

Fortune, however, seemed to smile upon him after the victory of Wurtchen. Davoust had recovered Hamburgh; a French corps was at the gates of Berlin; the head-quarters of Napoleon himself were at Breslaw; the allied Russian and Prussian army was beaten and discouraged, and, to all appearance, must recross the Vistula. At this crisis the emperor of Austria offered his mediation, and proposed an armistice, which commenced on the 1st of June. Napoleon went to Dresden, the emperor Francis came from Vienna into Bohemia; the emperor Alexander and king of Prussia had their head-quarters at Schweidnetz; and, at the suggestion of the Austrian minister, Metternich, a congress was opened at Prague. This congress

was dissolved abruptly with the termination of the armistice on the 10th of August. On the 12th the emperor of Austria declared war against his son-in-law Napoleon, and France; and at the same time, Bernadotte, prince royal or king elect of Sweden, who had been for some time detaching himself from the domination of Napoleon, and had concluded treaties with Russia and England, declared openly for the allies. The congress was but a pretext to gain time on the part of the allies, who were making gigantic preparation. The three armies of Russia, Prussia, and Austria, amounted to 400,000 infantry and 100,000 cavalry. Napoleon on his side pushed his resources to the utmost, but could muster only 260,000 infantry and 46,000 cavalry. Besides the balance of numbers thus turned against him, in a proportion so overwhelming, he lost his base of operations by the hostility of Austria. The Austrian army, consisting of 110,000 infantry and 45,000 cavalry, was commanded by prince Swartzenberg. Another auxiliary, upon whose accession at this moment the allies and the people of England set an exaggerated value, was general Moreau, whom his wife's influence, the temptations held out to him by the emperor of Russia, and his hatred of Napoleon had drawn from his retirement in America to take the field with the Russians against his countrymen.

The first incident after the re-opening of the campaign was the defeat of the French under Macdonald, by the Prussians under Blucher, on the frontier of Bohemia. Napoleon had gone a few days before to Dresden. Prince Swartzenberg with the main body of the allied forces advanced upon that

city, at the same time, and at four in the afternoon of the 26th of August commenced an attack. Napoleon was there, and had long before put Dresden in a state of defence. In a few minutes the cannonade became general and furious. Some redoubts and palisades were forced, and the allied cannon raked the streets of the Saxon capital. Napoleon ordered an attack in flank, which made the allies fall back; and night terminated the combat,—to be renewed next morning. It rained through the whole night; and both armies bivouacked in mud. On the 27th, at break of day, Napoleon directed an attack upon the left of the allies; at seven the artillery on both sides opened along the whole line, and at four in the afternoon prince Swartzenberg was in full retreat into Bohemia, with the loss of 40,000 men, and twenty-six pieces of artillery. General Moreau, whilst standing by the side of the emperor of Russia, and pointing his attention to a French position, had both his legs carried off by a cannon ball, and died four days after, regretted only by the enemies of his country.

This brilliant victory gained by Napoleon was neutralised by the reverses of his lieutenants Macdonald on the Katzbach, Vandamme (the latter himself taken, with 7000 men and 30 pieces of cannon,) at Kulm, Oudinot at Gross-Beeren, and Ney at Dennewitz. These advantages permitted the allies to concentrate their forces, and overwhelm Napoleon and the main army with superior numbers.

He quitted Dresden for Magdeburgh, taking the left bank of the Elbe, to deceive the allies. His object was to repass that river—march upon Berlin,—and,

by a vast combination of movements, place the allies between the Elbe and the Save, whilst he manœuvred under the protection of Torgau, Wurtemberg, Magdeburg, and Hamburg. His troops were in movement, and operations begun, when a letter from the king of Wurtemberg informed him of the defection of Bavaria, his own forced defection, and the march of 80,000 men under the Bavarian general Wrede upon the Rhine. This news compelled Napoleon to abandon a plan which he had meditated for two months, and adopt a new base of operations.*

After several combined movements and minor engagements, the allied and French armies concentrated in stupendous force upon Leipsic. Napoleon had 134,000 infantry and 22,000 cavalry; the allies had four combined armies, the Russian, Prussian, Austrian, and Swedish, or Northern, in all 300,000 infantry, and 50,000 cavalry. On the 16th of October both armies were in position within attacking distance in the plain and suburb of Leipsic. Prince Swartzenberg, commanding as generalissimo of the allies, advanced to the attack at nine in the morning, in three columns, covered by 200 pieces of artillery. The French posts which were the chief objects of attack, gave way to this tremendous fire, and a charge of Russian cuirassiers. Napoleon, who stood upon a hill which commanded the scene of action, directed the French batteries to play with such effect, that the allies gave way in their turn. The battle continued to rage with various fortune until twelve o'clock, when Napoleon brought his reserve

* Mém. de Nap.

against the centre of the allies. Swartzenberg strengthened his centre by fresh troops, and a murderous fire of artillery commenced on both sides. The Cossacks of the Russian guard at the same time attacked and defeated a division of French cavalry already in disorder under general Latour Maubourg, who had his thigh carried off by a cannon shot. The cannonade continued along the line until night put an end to the combat. Prince Poniatowski distinguished himself so conspicuously, that Napoleon created him on the field of battle a marshal of France. This was called the battle of Wachau, from the name of the chief post of the French.

The Austrians fell back upon their position during the night. No movement was made next day on either side, with the exception of a skirmish of cavalry on the left wing of the French.

The battle of Leipsic which may be said to have proximately decided the fate of Napoleon, commenced on the 17th at ten in the morning. The allies drove back the French advanced corps, but made no impression upon the effective French line and its artillery, inferior in the number of pieces, but directed with superior and admirable skill. Whilst Napoleon was engaged with prince Swartzenberg, marshal Ney, who formed with his corps the left wing of the French line, was engaged with Blucher and Bernadotte: the fortune of the day continued to be balanced by the valour and positions of the French, and the genius of their commander, in spite of the enormous disparity of numbers, when the Saxons, Wirtembergers, and some other Germans, went over to the allies, and

turned their artillery, variously stated at from forty to sixty pieces, against the French. Napoleon brought the reserve of his guard in support of his left wing, recovered two important posts from the Swedes and Saxons, and maintained the contest until night, during which he ordered a retreat behind the Elster, to secure his communication with Erfurth. The allies, seeing the French in motion, commenced a vigorous pursuit at day-break next morning. Napoleon remained in Leipsic till ten o'clock in the forenoon of the 19th, when the artillery, baggage, and principal masses of the French army, had crossed the Elster. The extreme rear-guard, which covered the retreat, was commanded by Macdonald and Poniatowski. In the confusion, through a mistake of either a colonel or sergeant of engineers, the principal bridge under which a mine had been prepared, was prematurely blown up, and the French rear-guard was cut off from the main army. The men plunged into the river, or were made prisoners, or sabred. Macdonald and Poniatowski sprang on horseback into the current; the former gained the opposite bank, but Poniatowski, who rode an imperfectly-trained horse, his own having been disabled under him during the action, and who was moreover severely wounded, was drowned. The death of this virtuous patriot and brave soldier was mourned by Poland and France.

The allied sovereigns subjected Leipsic to the horrors of an assault, in a spirit of cruel spite against the king of Saxony. When that virtuous and venerable sovereign, whose only offence was fidelity to his word, saluted them from the balcony of his palace.

as they passed, they did not deign to notice him, and made him and his court prisoners of war. But men accustomed to be beaten never know how to use victory.

The French army was broken in force and courage by this battle. On the 23d Napoleon reached his depôt at Erfurth, had a supply of ammunition and provisions, re-organised the army, and on the 30th encountered and defeated at Hanau 80,000 Bavarians and other Germans, under general Wrede, who opposed his passage to the Rhine. On the 2d of November, the French army crossed the Rhine at Frankfort, and Napoleon was at Paris on the 9th.

Danger now pressed, and ruin threatened at every point of the frontier of France,—the lower as well as the upper Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees. Holland, weakly garrisoned by the French, was invaded by the allies, and that phlegmatic people received back the house of Orange without reluctance or inclination. In Italy the viceroy was pressed by the Austrians, who invaded the Illyrian provinces, and by Murat, who joined the allies.

But the quarter from which danger pressed upon Napoleon the most closely was the Pyrenees. In the Peninsula, no active operation took place before the middle of May, 1813. The French army was weakened by the drain upon it for the campaign of Saxony. Lord Wellington was occupied in concerting measures with the Spanish government, and restoring order in his army after the retreat of Burgos. He opened the campaign with an offensive movement, of which the object was to turn the line of the combined French armies under king Joseph, on the Douro. Jo-

seph, by the advice of marshal Jourdan, who really directed the operations as his major-general, being thus threatened by lord Wellington, evacuated Madrid and Valladolid, and concentrated his forces upon the great road of Burgos. That place, now unprovided and indefensible, was abandoned, and the French army continued its retrograde movement upon the line of fortresses of the Ebro. "An evil genius," says a French narrative of the war, "seemed to preside over the operations of this campaign." The French had resolved to blow up the works of the castle of Burgos previously to their retreat: the match was applied before the last column had completely evacuated the town: the fire communicated with a mass of combustible projectiles, of which the composition and effects had not been taken into account: and these having exploded, and descended in a terrific shower upon the receding column, killed several hundred men.

King Joseph supposed that he should be attacked by lord Wellington in front, on the great road to France. He deceived himself: lord Wellington's plan was to turn the French line on the Ebro, as he had already turned that upon the Douro. The French bestow upon his movements, in this instance, the praise of science, which they rarely and reluctantly accord him. Joseph's line of march was flanked by lord Wellington; and on the 20th of June both approached Vittoria, and took up positions before that place. They were separated by a chain of gentle declivities. On the evening of the 20th, lord Wellington reconnoitred the whole front of the French line, and attacked it in three strong columns

next morning at break of day. The French left was assailed, and after a vigorous resistance compelled to yield, by sir Rowland Hill. The French centre, having been weakened, to support this wing, was attacked by sir Lowry Cole with his division, and lord Dalhousie's reserve, and driven upon Vittoria. Sir Thomas Graham turned the enemy's right wing, and, after a hard conflict, cut off his retreat upon Bayonne. At seven in the evening Joseph ordered a retreat upon Pampeluna, the only road now open to him.

The position of the French was ill chosen, and their artillery, ammunition, and waggons, most improvidently placed. When the retreat was ordered, it proved that the movement of carriages by the Pampeluna road was rendered impossible by the interposition of marshy ground. The confusion of defeat and flight became dreadful. The whole of the French artillery of reserve, the ammunition and baggage waggons, the military chest, the equipages and treasure of king Joseph, all fell into the hands of the victors. A considerable number of the Spanish partisans of king Joseph travelled in carriages with their families in the train, and under the protection, of the French army. These now presented the most appalling spectacle. Fathers and mothers were seen carrying their children in their arms, wild with despair, and imploring the retreating French to save them from the vengeance of their countrymen. Many of the French cavalry, moved by their cries and intreaties, were seen retreating with women mounted behind them, and children in their arms,

or placed before them on the pummels of their saddles.

Among the trophies of this victory, was the baton of marshal Jourdan, taken by the 87th regiment. Lord Wellington sent it over with the despatches to the prince regent, who presented him the baton of a British field-marshal, with the following letter in return:—

"*Carlton-House, July* 3. 1813.

"My dear Lord,—Your glorious conduct is beyond all human praise, and far above my reward; I know no language the world affords worthy to express it. I feel I have nothing left to say, but devoutly to offer up my prayers of gratitude to Providence, that it has, in its omnipotent bounty, blessed my country and myself with such a general. You have sent me among the trophies of your unrivalled fame, the staff of a French marshal, and I send you in return that of England. The British army will hail it with enthusiasm, while the whole universe will acknowledge those valorous efforts which have so imperiously called for it. That uninterrupted health, and still increasing laurels, may continue to crown you through a glorious and long career of life, are the never ceasing and most ardent wishes of, my dear lord, your very sincere and faithful friend,

"G. P. R.

"*The Marquis of Wellington.*"

This splendid victory excited throughout the kingdom transports of joy. It was celebrated by an illumination of London, and a truly grand national festival in Vauxhall gardens. Many hundreds of the most distinguished and respectable persons in the United

Kingdom, the foreign ambassadors, and other strangers, sat down to dinner; and in the evening the gardens were crowded with ladies, introduced by the stewards.

During these idle rejoicings in England, lord Wellington was fighting his way to the frontier of France. The French army, after a short halt upon the glacis of Pampeluna, continued its retreat to the Pyrenees. Its right wing was still within view when the British right and centre, in pursuit, was checked by the fire of the ramparts of the town. Lord Wellington caused Pampeluna to be invested by a force only sufficient to prevent its receiving supplies. St. Sebastian was also abandoned to the defence of its garrison, in the retreat of the French army upon the Pyrenees. Lord Wellington resolved to push the siege of the latter place with the utmost activity, from its commanding a communication by sea with England, and confided this service to sir Thomas Graham.

The disastrous intelligence of the battle of Vittoria reached Napoleon at Dresden, at the most auspicious moment of the Saxon campaign. It came upon him like a thunderbolt. He immediately sent off marshal Soult to take the command in Spain, with supreme power as lieutenant of the emperor. Soult arrived at Bayonne on the 12th of July, and superseded both Joseph and Jourdan. Bayonne, the first and most important frontier place of France on the side of the Pyrenees, was totally unprovided and defenceless. Lord Wellington has been censured for his slow pursuit after the battle of Vittoria. He should have pursued the French, it has been

said, across the frontier, and might have taken Bayonne by a *coup de main*; but, intoxicated with his triumph, he lost time in counting his trophies. Soult put Bayonne in a state of defence, made provision for his supplies of pay and subsistence, and re-organised the army into an effective force of 65,000 men, in three corps, under generals Reille, D'Erlon, and Clausel, as his lieutenants. On the 25th of July he resumed the offensive, and re-crossed the frontier, directing his movements to relieve St. Sebastian and Pampeluna. At day-break on the 27th, impatient to distinguish his new rank, he attacked the British in a strong position on the crest of the heights of Zubiri; was repulsed; renewed the attack several times without success; and ordered a general retreat. This first failure damped the confidence created by the arrival of Soult.

In the mean time Pampeluna and St. Sebastian not only held out but made sorties against the besiegers. An attempt to take St. Sebastian by assault failed with great loss on the 25th; but a renewed assault, after three hours' dreadful carnage, put the British in possession of the town on the 31st of August. Sir Thomas Graham rendered the breach practicable, and swept down the garrison by directing his guns over the heads of the storming party, — one of the happiest inspirations of courage and address in this branch of military science. The garrison retired into the castle, and maintained itself there until the 9th of October, when it surrendered with the honours of war.

Soult again fell back upon the French frontier, and lord Wellington made preparations for more vi-

gorously continuing the campaign. The month of September however was passed on both sides without active operations or decisive movements. On the 8th of October, at eight o'clock in the morning, a British column crossed the Bidassoa, and trod the soil of France. The French were taken by surprise, and their whole line of advanced posts driven back. Soult, who was some leagues off, arrived at one, and checked the progress of the British, without recovering his posts on the river. The garrison of Pampeluna, reduced by famine, capitulated as prisoners, with the honours of war, on the 13th of October. On the 10th of November, lord Wellington attacked the French lines, forced them, compelled Soult to take a parallel position two leagues in the rear, and pushed his own head-quarters to St. Jean de Luz. After some partial affairs from the 10th of November to the 9th of December, lord Wellington passed the Nive on the morning of that day, and Soult still falling back, moved his head-quarters to Bayonne. During the night of the 9th, Soult resolved upon the well-conceived and hardy enterprise of attacking and dividing the British army which occupied both banks of the river. The attempt, made next morning, failed in its main end, but placed lord Wellington in a most critical situation, and caused him the loss of 5000 men *hors de combat*. The battle of St. Pierre D'Isube, fought on the 13th of December,—the most sanguinary of the affairs on the Nive,—put lord Wellington in possession of the left bank of the Adour.

The operations of the allied British and Spanish forces against Suchet in Valentia, Arragon, and Ca-

talonia, were for the most part disreputable failures. Sir John Murray, having obtained some advantage over a corps of Suchet's army on the heights of Castella near Alicant, embarked at the latter place for the purpose of co-operating more directly against the frontier of France, by besieging Tarragona. Suchet, who had been created, by Napoleon, duke of Albufera, for his capture of this strong place, provided it with additional defences, and marched immediately from Valentia into Catalonia for the purpose of relieving it. Sir John Murray, seized with an unaccountable panic or excess of prudence, over-rated the danger from Suchet's approach, and embarked on board the British squadron lying off, with the loss of his artillery and baggage. His flight was censured and ridiculed in England; and his command given to lord William Bentinck, who also failed against Tarragona, but without discredit.

The victorious advance of lord Wellington, after the battle of Vittoria, rendered it necessary to concentrate the French armies towards the frontier of France. Suchet, having withdrawn the French garrison, blew up the ancient walls of Tarragona, built by Roman hands, and had some sharp affairs with the Spaniards in Catalonia during his movements towards the Pyrenees. Thus closed the peninsular campaign of 1813.

CHAP. XX.

1814.

CAMPAIGN OF 1814 IN FRANCE. — OCCUPATION OF PARIS. — ABDICATION OF NAPOLEON. — VISIT OF THE ALLIED SOVEREIGNS TO THE PRINCE REGENT. — PROCLAMATION OF PEACE.

At the close of 1813 the whole armed force of combined Europe pressed upon the French emperor; and the eyes of nations were diverted from their own domestic policy to the great drama, of which the catastrophe was approaching. The session of parliament was opened by the regent in person, with a speech which consisted chiefly of a recapitulation of military successes and treaties of alliance. The speech was heard and the addresses were carried in both houses with unanimity and applause. A convention entered into with Russia and Prussia; a bill for the augmentation of the disposable military force of the country, by extending the sphere of service of the militia; a loan, and several subsidies to foreign powers, received, with scarcely any opposition, the sanction of parliament. On the 20th of December both houses were adjourned to the 1st of March. This long adjournment was opposed by sir James Mackintosh, in a speech of distinguished

talent, on the ground that the high control of parliament should not cease to be exercised for an unusually long period, during which various interests of the greatest importance were about to be decided. The object of ministers was precisely to release themselves from this troublesome control and its attendant publicity, and the adjournment accordingly took place. Another motive was to disengage lord Castlereagh, who was just appointed to proceed as minister plenipotentiary to the head-quarters of the allies. He received his full powers, took leave of the prince regent on the 27th of December, and sailed from Harwich on the 29th, with his lady and a numerous suite, on board the Erebus, in a thick fog.

It was then rumoured, and has since been repeated, that Napoleon lost his energy in the Russian and Saxon campaigns. That wonderful man, on the contrary, prepared for the campaign of 1814 with the resolution of the lion hunted to his lair, and more than his activity. He employed and set in motion at the same time every engine of political and military administration to raise fresh armies.

The allied sovereigns paused at Frankfort, as if hesitating to cross the Rhine, and proposed, as a basis of negotiation, that France should be confined within her natural boundaries, the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees. This basis, offered by prince Metternich, count Nesselrode, and lord Aberdeen, was accepted on the part of Napoleon by general Caulincourt, duke of Vicenza. But his acceptance, according to Napoleon, surprised and disconcerted the allies, who calculated upon rejection, and sought only a new theme for blazoning forth their own

moderation and his ambition in their manifestoes. They, in point of fact, declined negotiation at Frankfort; proposed a congress at Chatillon on the Seine; and issued a declaration which might deserve the praise of moderation and justice if such documents were not, in general, mere artifices of language and disguise.

Napoleon neither shut his own eyes, nor attempted to shut those of the French people, to the extent of his danger. "But a year ago," said he to the legislative body, "all Europe was with us; now all Europe is against us. The reason is, that the opinion of the world is directed either by France or England." "I never," said he in another state harangue, "was seduced by prosperity; adversity shall find me above its attacks.... I have conceived, and executed great designs for the happiness of the world."

His plan of military organisation was briefly this: a new levy of 348 battalions, making altogether a mass of 288,000 men, to be divided into eight corps. He besides called out the national guard, to perform local and permanent duty, and classified 121 battalions to be disposable for any service within the frontier, until the enemy should have evacuated France. Commissioners of military enrolment, fortification, and defence, throughout the districts of the empire, superseded for the moment the ordinary magistracy.

The plan of invasion of the allies was discussed and decided on by a military council at Frankfort. It was gigantic as the power by which it was to be carried into effect: the whole military force of the

coalition in different quarters,—Germany, Italy, and Spain,—was nearly 900,000 men. Bernadotte was charged with the conquest of Holland and Belgium; prince Schwartzenberg was to pass the Rhine at its source in Switzerland; Blucher between Mentz and Strasburgh; and the two latter, bearing upon Paris, were to form a junction in the plains of Champagne, between the Meuse and the Marne. Prince Schwartzenberg, crossing the bridge of Bâle, violated without scruple, and in defiance of remonstrance, the neutrality of Switzerland. Blucher crossed the Rhine on the night of the 31st of December, at several points; and having occupied the open undefended town of Nanci, went through the burlesque form of demanding the keys.

The armies of Schwartzenberg, Blucher, and Winzingerode,—the last under the orders of Bernadotte,—formed in three effective masses a total of 300,000 men advancing upon Paris about the middle of January, from the different points of the frontier.

Napoleon's skeleton regiments of veteran troops and his new levies not yet disciplined, or even completely embodied, promised but a feeble resistance to this overwhelming superiority of numbers. It might be supposed he would act on the defensive. But adopting the offensive, his favourite system, and the source of his glory, he ordered the main army to be concentrated between the Seine and Marne, in the centre of operations, and made his arrangements for leaving Paris. Having invested his brother Joseph with the chief command in the capital, and appointed Maria Louisa regent, he assembled round him the officers of the national

guard, in the Hall of the Marshals at the Tuileries, recommended to their courage and fidelity his wife and son, received the mingled assurance of their acclamations and tears, and set out for the army on the 24th of January.

The congress in the mean time had assembled at Chatillon, and a new basis of negotiation was presented by the allies. They now required that France should be confined within her limits as they existed before the revolution.

A strong light is thrown upon the views and character of Napoleon, in a confidential letter addressed by him to Caulincourt, his minister at the congress, before he set out for the army. "I doubt," said he, "the sincerity of the allies, and the wish of England, for peace; for me, I wish such a peace as shall be secure and honourable. France, without her natural limits, would no longer be on a par with the other states of Europe. These limits have been recognised at Frankfort..... Would they reduce France to her ancient limits? — It would be to degrade her..... They deceive themselves if they suppose the calamities of war could make a nation desire such a peace. There is not a French heart but would feel the opprobrium in six months; and reproach the government that was dastardly enough to sign it. Italy is untouched; the viceroy has a fine army: before eight days, even before the arrival of my troops from Spain, I shall have the means of fighting many battles. The devastations of the Cossacks will arm the inhabitants and double our force. If the nation seconds me, the enemy runs upon his destruction, — *if for-*

tune betrays me, my resolution is formed — I do not hold by the throne. You must learn what Metternich is about: — confine yourself at present to learn all you can, and let me know. I am going to join the army." In another letter to Caulincourt he says, he has but three courses open to him: "to fight and conquer, — or fight and die gloriously, — or, *if the nation did not support him, to abdicate.*" Such were the resolutions of Napoleon, when he left Paris to place himself at the head of the troops. How many vain speculations and unjust reproaches are disposed of by the last sentence!

Arrived at Chalons, on the 26th of January, he placed himself at the head of about 70,000 men to encounter 300,000. Schwartzenberg and Blücher were in communication, but had not yet formed a junction. His design was to fight them separately. The first engagement took place on the 29th, at Brienne, with Blucher. Napoleon had the advantage, but not decisively. A brave old French admiral, named Baste, no longer employed at sea, served as a general in the action, and was killed. Napoleon was attacked by a Cossack with his lance, and would probably have fallen if general Gourgaud, an orderly officer, had not killed the assailant. It was chiefly a *mêlée* in the town of Brienne, and caused dreadful slaughter on both sides.

Blucher retreated upon Bar-sur-Aube; concentrated his forces at Trannes; received large reinforcements from Schwartzenberg; and on the 1st of February gave orders for an attack. His army, with the reinforcements, consisted of Prussians, Austrians, Russians, Bavarians, Wirtembergers,

and men of other German states; to prevent confusion, and perhaps as a Bourbon signal, he ordered them to wear a white scarf on the left arm. Napoleon did not expect a general attack, when Grouchy informed him that Blucher had opened a fire upon the whole line. He instantly mounted his horse, countermanded the movement of Ney upon Troyes, and examined the enemy's line from the outposts, under the disadvantage of a heavy fall of snow. The cannonade on both sides began furiously. The two wings of the French army resisted firmly, but the centre became unsteady. A successful charge of Bavarian cavalry decided the combat. Napoleon from that moment thought only of securing his retreat, and fought and manœuvred to fall back upon Brienne. The loss in killed and wounded on both sides was nearly equal; but the moral effect of a victory gained by Blucher over Napoleon, with whatever superiority of numbers, was a serious injury. It was felt not only in both armies, but through Europe. The battle was fought in the plain of Rothiere, by which name it is distinguished.

It is scarcely possible to conceive how one mind had strength and elasticity to bear all that pressed at this moment upon that of the French emperor. He had not only to create and direct his military resources from the centre to every extremity of France; but also — from his confidence in his own genius and diffidence of that of Caulincourt, — to direct the campaign of diplomacy at Chatillon. Caulincourt, faithful and attached, and endowed with the prudence of a common mind, without a particle of the resolution of his master — of whose displeasure,

moreover, he was in constant dread,—harassed Napoleon with the expression of his apprehensions of the result, and his complaints of the difficulties of his situation. "I am here," said he, "opposed to four negotiators" (reckoning the three English plenipotentiaries only for one*), who act in concert, upon instructions previously concerted by their respective courts. They would have a protocol—I consent—but the most simple observation I propose to record is objected to; and I am obliged to yield rather than waste precious time in vain discussions." Caulincourt had communicated to Napoleon a letter, addressed to him privately by prince Metternich, and earnestly recommending Napoleon's acceptance of the terms offered by the allies, immediately after the battle of Rothiere. Napoleon wrote to his minister in reply:—"M. le duc Vicence. The report of prince Schwartzenberg is nonsense (*une folie*). It was not a battle; the old guard was not there; the young guard did not give out. A charge of cavalry took some guns from us. It appears that the whole of the enemy's army was there, and they call that a battle. Those people must know little of their business."

Napoleon arrived at Troyes on the 3d of February. The inhabitants received him coldly; and the agents of the Bourbons induced between five and six thousand conscripts, raised in that part of France, to desert. He continued his retreat to Nogent, where he expected some regiments sent by Soult, and new levies from Paris.

Prince Schwartzenberg, at the head of the grand

* Lord Aberdeen, Lord Cathcart, and Sir C. Stewart.

allied army, occupied Troyes two days after, by a general movement.

Having made dispositions to guard the passage of the Seine at Nogent, Montereau, and Auxerre, Napoleon concentrated his army at Sezanne, where he was joined by Ney and Marmont on the night of the 9th. On the 10th he routed a Russian corps, and took its commander-in-chief, general Alsusiew, prisoner at Champ-Aubert; on the 11th defeated the combined Prussian and Russian armies of Yorck and Sacken at Montmirail; and on the 12th obtained a second victory over the Prussians, under general Yorck at Château-Thiery. His skill as a manœuvrer, and prodigious activity, thus enabled him to neutralise superior numbers, by attacking his enemy in detail.

Blucher, who remained unaccountably inactive during three days, moved at last, on the 12th, against Marmont, who was posted at Montmirail. Napoleon, aware of this movement, returned from Château Thiery to Marmont's aid. Blucher knew neither the defeat of his lieutenants, Yorck and Sacken, nor the position of Napoleon. He posted himself in the village of Vauxchamps. Napoleon ordered Marmont to attack that village; and Grouchy, with the light cavalry, to turn the Prussian left. Blucher strengthened this wing, supposing it the chief object of attack. His right, which he weakened, was soon more furiously assailed. Napoleon with the main army attacked his front; the village of Vauxchamps was carried by Marmont; and Grouchy turned the left of Blucher, who in consequence ordered a general retreat. Napoleon completely defeated Blucher in

this battle. The Prussian loss in killed and wounded was near 7000 men, chiefly caused by the French cavalry and artillery. In the confidence of these successive victories, which displayed his genius more than they improved his fortune, Napoleon fatally countermanded the orders which he had given for the advance of the viceroy with his army from Italy into France.

Whilst Paris was thus protected from Blucher, it was threatened with still greater danger from prince Schwartzenberg, who was advancing upon Fontainbleau and Nangis. It required the utmost activity of Napoleon to anticipate him by a march from the Marne to the Yeres; he left Montmirail on the morning of the 15th; marched with the imperial guard night and day; rallied round him for action the several corps on his route; made his dispositions at Guignes on the 16th; and advanced upon Nangis on the 17th at break of day, prepared to attack.

The allied army taken by surprise, or from incapacity in its chiefs, opposed to the French emperor what has been described as a fantastic line on the right bank of the Seine, occupied *en échelons* by the corps of Wittgenstein, Wrede, and the prince of Wirtemberg. On the 17th the allies were routed with great loss by Napoleon at the villages of Mormant and Valjouan. Prince Schwartzenberg, informed of these checks, withdrew some corps to the left bank of the Seine, maintaining a position at Montereau on the right bank, to observe the further movements of Napoleon, and protect the concentration of his army. Napoleon made his dispositions

during the night of the 17th, to attack this position on the morning of the 18th. Marshal Victor halted on the preceding day, two leagues in the rear of Monterau; pleaded fatigue; was ordered by Napoleon, the best quarters, and the softest bed; and was indebted, at the restoration, to his want of energy on this occasion for the especial favour of the Bourbons. The marshal, however, having thus lost a day and missed the occupation of the bridges, attacked the prince of Wirtemberg at nine o'clock next morning. The combat was maintained without decisive advantage till near one, when general Gerard brought to bear 40 pieces of artillery, and mastered that of the allies. Napoleon himself soon arrived, at full gallop, from Nangis; directed an attack upon all points with complete success; pressed them so vigorously that their retreat became a route, and cried, in a transport of joy, "My heart is relieved: I have saved the capital of my empire."

A partial affair at the village of Mery on the Seine increased his confidence: he rejoiced in the prospect of a grand battle, which might decide the fortunes of the campaign, but was disappointed. The allies continued their retreat by the two routes of Bar-sur-Seine and Bar-le-duc. The French army re-occupied Troyes, and was now well received, after the inhabitants had experience of the Cossacks.

The military council of the allied sovereigns resolved on a new plan of operations upon Paris. Blucher separating again from Schwartzenberg, and forming a junction with the corps of Winzingerode and Bulow, who were advancing from the lower Rhine, proposed to separate Marmont from the

main army, and march on Paris with a mass of 100,000 men.

Napoleon, having failed to bring Schwartzenberg to a general engagement, proceeded with his accustomed rapidity of movement to act against Blucher. The advance of Napoleon upon the Marne made Blucher suspend his movement on Paris. Napoleon was now in the rear of the army of Blucher; whilst marshals Marmont and Mortier were between him and the capital. Blucher's destruction seemed imminent, when the weak or treacherous surrender of Soissons by a general Moreau extricated him from his perilous situation, by enabling him to cross the Aisne and join Bulow and Winzengerode. Napoleon's indignation knew no bounds; and he directed the authors of the capitulation of Soissons to be tried by a council of war.

On the 5th of March Napoleon recovered Rheims from the allies, thereby cutting off all communication between Blucher and Schwartzenberg; had an affair of posts on the 6th at Craon; and on the 7th, nearly on the same ground, one of the most sanguinary and hard fought battles of the campaign. The artillery on both sides did dreadful execution, especially that of the French, better directed, and acting upon larger masses, which performed fewer and slower evolutions. Both sides claimed the victory: Napoleon, it is true, remained in possession of the field, but with the loss of 8000 men killed and wounded. No prisoners were taken.

Successive engagements on the 8th, 9th, and 10th, were favourable to the French, but seriously re-

duced their numerical strength, already so disproportioned.

In the mean time prince Schwartzenberg was advancing with an overwhelming force, before which marshal Macdonald, charged with the chief command whilst Napoleon engaged Blucher, was obliged to retreat. Napoleon once more threw himself before Schwartzenberg and the Austrians on the Aube. Schwartzenberg, whose army was concentrated upon Arcis-sur-Aube, became alarmed by the combined movements of the French emperor and Macdonald. The latter, now supported by Napoleon, had resumed the offensive. The Austrian general's movements betrayed indecision of purpose. Napoleon instantly perceived the working of his mind, and, to take advantage of it, ordered an attack upon the villages of Arcis and Torcy, on the morning of the 20th. It was here that the French emperor fought sword in hand. Some troops were falling back to the bridge of Arcis: he stood before the fugitives, cried, "Who will repass before I do?" rallied them, and ordered up a brigade of the old guard, which checked the allies. At night, when the combat ceased, both the villages of Arcis and Torcy were in flames. Napoleon made a glorious but expiring effort this day: he exposed himself during the action in the hottest fire. His horse under him, and several officers by his side, were wounded. It was, perhaps, a last effort of reckless or heroic desperation.

The congress at Chatillon had now broken up. Napoleon, in spite of the advice and predictions of Caulincourt, adhered to what he called the rights of

Eugene Beauharnois, in Italy, and the natural limits of France. It is doubtful whether even his acceptance of the concessions demanded would not have been evaded in the congress. Of the four allied powers, three were resolved upon dethroning him. The emperor of Austria, it is true, was naturally disposed to consult the interests of his daughter and grandson. He corresponded constantly with the empress, and assured her in every letter, "he would not in any turn of events, separate the cause of his daughter and grandson from that of France."* Prince Schwartzenberg manifested a disinclination to march on Paris; and even prince Metternich, in his private letters to Caulincourt, which have been published since the death of Napoleon, uses persuasion and entreaty to induce Napoleon's acceptance without delay of the terms proposed. "If," said he in a confidential private letter, "the emperor Napoleon listens to the voice of reason, seeks his glory in the happiness of a great nation, and renounces what have hitherto been his views, the emperor will once more recollect with pleasure the moment when he confided to him his favourite child."—"Is not," he says in another letter, "the throne of Louis XIV. and Louis XV. too fine an inheritance to be staked upon a single card?"

But lord Castlereagh's arrival at the congress rendered the restoration of the Bourbons morally certain. It was his constant aim; and such are supposed to have been the instructions with which he left England. He has been called the pupil and the dupe of Metternich. The Austrian minister, on the

* Mém. de Savary — Letter of Caulincourt to Napoleon.

contrary, yielded to lord Castlereagh. It has been said by persons of authority, with means of information, that prince Metternich is very liable to be the dupe of his own finesse. There is no character more common in the world. Napoleon said of him in one of his letters to Caulincourt, "Metternich thinks he is leading all Europe, whilst every body leads him." Prince Metternich had set his heart upon the aggrandisement of Austria in Italy. Lord Castlereagh, whose great ambition was to uncrown Napoleon and restore Louis XVIII., told him that Italy could not be safely yielded to the emperor of Austria without the restoration of the Bourbons. Napoleon at the same time, in the transport of his victory over Blucher, wrote a captious and recriminating letter to his father-in-law. Anger, ambition, the remembrance of past, and perhaps fear of future, humiliations extinguished the feelings of nature in the bosom of the emperor Francis, one of the weakest of men; and upon the breaking up of the congress, he proceeded to the Austrian army of Savoy, leaving his allies to march on Paris, and decide the fate of his daughter and grandson.

On the 23d of March a council of war was held at the quarters of prince Schwartzenberg: the subject of deliberation was the march of Napoleon upon St. Dizier, and his thus throwing himself by a desperate hazard, or profound manœuvre, in the rear of the allies. It was still resolved that the grand allied army should proceed to Chalons, there unite with Blucher, and bear vigorously on Paris. An intercepted letter of Napoleon to the empress had some share in this determination. It fell into

the hands of Blucher, who, by a characteristic solecism, forwarded it, as a matter of military courtesy, to the empress, with the seal broken. It was not thus the Athenians acted, when they became possessed of Philip's letters to Olympia. Prince Schwartzenberg, unwilling to proceed to extremities against the daughter and grandson of the emperor of Austria, and recollecting, perhaps, the relations of intimacy and kindness formerly subsisting between him and Napoleon, seemed indisposed to execute the movements prescribed to him. The emperor Alexander, now taking the lead, and treating the king of Prussia as a mere cipher, immediately called a council of his own generals; and after deliberating with them, told prince Schwartzenberg he should himself march on Paris, at the head of the allied army.

Lord Wellington, who first crossed the French frontier, was constrained to a state of inaction by bad roads, and the rigours of the season, in his position on the line of the Pyrenees. He took advantage of a hard frost to cross the Adour about the middle of February; and moved on the 26th upon Orthes. A few skirmishes only took place during his advance. Marshal Soult was posted strongly here, having abandoned to his adversary the passage of the Save and the Oleron. Lord Wellington reconnoitred Soult's position on the morning of the 27th; prepared at nine o'clock an attack along the whole line; and availing himself of his superior numbers, disposed generals Picton, Hill, and Beresford to attack the centre, and turn both wings of the French army. The want of space and the heavy play of the French artillery did not admit of Beresford's developing

his masses, or debouching from a village of which he possessed himself. Informed of this difficulty, lord Wellington changed his plan, and brought the cavalry under sir Stapleton Cotton and lord Edward Somerset to bear upon the French right and centre, which were thus subjected to a double attack. Sir R. Hill forded a river on the left. After hard fighting along the whole French line, and the loss of between 2000 and 3000 killed and wounded on both sides, Soult ordered a general retreat, upon the town of Aire on the Adour. Here he was overtaken and attacked in a strong position by sir R. Hill, but not dislodged. On the night of the 2d of March, the French marshal continued his retreat upon Tarbes, leaving Bordeaux exposed to lord Wellington. A royalist committee in that town, encouraged by the victory of Orthes, and the presence of the duke of Angouleme, at the British head-quarters, invited lord Wellington to advance: marshal Beresford, by his orders, marched upon Bordeaux; and entered it without resistance, on the 12th of March. After three partial affairs at Maubourguet, Vic-Bigorre, and Tarbes, Soult, on the 20th of March, continued his retreat upon Toulouse, pursued by lord Wellington. At the same time marshal Suchet, who commanded the French army of Catalonia, received orders from Napoleon to abandon Spain to king Ferdinand, now released from bondage, and on his way to the frontier.

The order of dates, and the main interest of this momentous, finely contested, and unequal game, demand that the march of the allies on Paris should be resumed. Whilst the allies were advancing

upon the capital, and the two marshals Marmont and Mortier were manœuvring to form a junction with Napoleon, who would still have many chances, with the resources of his genius and 50,000 or 60,000 men in the rear of the enemy, those marshals found themselves suddenly in contact with the army of Schwartzenberg at Fere Champenoise; became engaged, in a double combat of cavalry, with that of the Silesian army under Blucher, and the Austrian under prince Schwartzenberg; and were defeated with great loss. After some further slight affairs, they fell back upon Paris, and the allies crossed the Marne, and advanced upon the capital unopposed. On the 29th of March Marmont and Mortier occupied the heights and villages which constitute the defence of Paris.

The preparations for resistance, the ferment of intrigue, passion, and party, at this fearful crisis, in the French capital, have been too often and too fully described, to require circumstantial narration. Joseph was intrusted with the defence of Paris, having marshal Moncey for his adviser. The attack was commenced by the Russians and Austrians on the 30th of March, at six in the morning. Joseph had no idea that Paris was assailed by the whole allied army, and was confirmed in his belief by the successful resistance of the troops under Marmont and Mortier, and the Parisian guard. The allies, after fighting since six in the morning, were disconcerted at the chief points between eleven and twelve; and Barclay de Tolly gave his troops a respite, until he should be supported by the army of Silesia under Blucher, which had not yet engaged. Blucher was seen ad-

vancing into action. Joseph, convinced of his error and his danger, consulted with the generals on the means of saving the capital, and securing the retreat of the army. Blucher took St. Denis, and made arrangements for the attack of the heights of Montmartre. At this moment, Joseph, having authorised the two marshals to enter into a capitulation for evacuating Paris, joined the empress and her son, who had left Paris by order of Napoleon for Blois. The departure of the empress was unfortunate. She manifested a force of character, it has been stated by those about her, worthy of Maria Theresa, declared her resolution to meet the allies, with the imperial diadem on her head, and abandoned Paris with reluctance. Her departure left the field clear to the pensioned broken down old jacobins, and veteran intriguers of the revolution, who were already concerting with the emperor Alexander the restoration of the Bourbons.

The departure of Joseph was followed by an armistice, and convention, in pursuance of which the French corps of Marmont and Mortier were to evacuate Paris with all their *materiel* during that day and night, and the allies to enter at six next morning.

In the mean time two parties were striving for the ascendancy in Paris: those who were faithful to Napoleon, but thought that he could no longer reign, and wished to confer the regency of France upon the empress in the name of her son; and those who had already conspired to restore the Bourbons. It was an unequal contest: the empress and her son were absent; Talleyrand was in

communication with the allies, and had gained a party in that servile and immoral refuse of the revolutionary factions, called the senate.

The allied sovereigns entered Paris on the 31st of March, amid demonstrations of joy, which have been grossly exaggerated. The national guard and mass of the inhabitants took little part in the cries of "*Vivent les Bourbons,*" or the display of Bourbon colours.

The emperor of Russia held a council in the afternoon at the house of prince Talleyrand. Caulincourt arrived with fresh propositions: it was too late; the council at Talleyrand's had resolved not to treat with Napoleon or any of his family. A provisional government was appointed, with Talleyrand for its chief. On the 2d of April, the senate pronounced the deposition or forfeiture of Napoleon and the discontinuance of the succession in his family, the legislative body gave its adhesion, and the municipal body expressed the wish that the Bourbons should be restored.

Napoleon, in the mean time, traced the march of his army from Troyes upon Paris on the 29th; preceded it post haste with Berthier and two other generals by the road of Fontainbleau; met general Belliard at the village of Cour-de-France, only three leagues from the capital, on the 30th; learned for the first time the battle and capitulation of Paris; and, having been joined by the corps of Mortier, was with great difficulty dissuaded by the generals from continuing to advance. He fell back on Fontainbleau, and disposed his army for acting instantly on the offensive. News reached Paris that he was advancing

with 50,000 men. The allies, dreading the issue of a battle under the walls of Paris, resolved to evacuate the capital and take up a position at Meaux. At this moment prince Schwartzenberg announced that he was negotiating secretly with Marmont, and the evacuation was countermanded. Napoleon, at the same time, yielding to the advice of the marshals who were about him, signed an act of abdication in favour of the empress and his son, and charged Ney, Macdonald, and Caulincourt, to take it to Paris. He desired that on their way they should communicate their mission to his early friend and companion in arms, Marmont, and associate him as a colleague. That marshal was still at Essonne secretly negotiating his desertion, when the presence of the three envoys, and the confidence reposed in him by Napoleon, overwhelmed him with confusion. He, however, accompanied them to Paris.

After a day's negotiation the emperor Alexander rejected the proposed abdication. The three envoys urged the attachment of the soldiers to Napoleon, and the danger of provoking them by proceeding to extremities against one whom they adored. At the moment an aide-de-camp brought the emperor Alexander a despatch. "You speak, gentlemen," said he, "of the attachment of the French army, — look at this letter." It came from prince Schwartzenberg, announcing the defection of Marmont and his corps, which had already been marched to Versailles. Marmont was present. The other marshals glanced at him with scorn; even the emperor of Russia said to him, with a contemptuous sneer, "M. le marechal, you made

haste." Marmont was not aware that his infamous compact had yet been executed. The generals who were his accomplices had taken some alarm in his absence and marched the corps off to Versailles. The men and most of the officers, who were not in the secret, supposed it was a movement against the enemy, and were frantic with rage and despair, when they discovered how they had been betrayed into the hands of the Russians, by whom they were surrounded. "I would give," said Marmont, "an arm to avert this." — "Say rather your life," replied Macdonald. It was not without reason that Marmont called himself the most unfortunate of men on a recent occasion, when he again played an odious, but less infamous part.

Napoleon hesitated for a moment to abdicate unconditionally. The martial air and enthusiastic fidelity of the few veteran regiments he had still round him, moved at once his ambition and his heart. He seemed to cling to the fortune of war, with the lingering attachment of a lover to a mistress who had adhered to him so faithfully and so long.

On the 11th of April he abdicated that gorgeous throne which he had raised with his own hands; and the count d'Artois made his public entry into Paris as lieutenant-general of the kingdom, until Louis Stanislaus Xavier, recalled to the throne of France, should arrive from England, and accept a constitution which the provisional government had prepared.

The underplot of diplomacy and intrigue, which brought about this catastrophe, was managed in chief

by the emperor of Russia and Talleyrand prince of Benevento. The monarch fully equalled the diplomatist as an intriguer. He played upon all parties with the adroitness, and imposed on some with more than the hypocrisy, of a "true Greek of the lower empire." The chief author of the deposition of Napoleon and his dynasty, he contrived to make it appear that he gave only a forced assent; and so completely deceived the empress Josephine and her daughter the queen Hortense, both persons of superior sense, that they complied with his request to be received at Malmaison without ceremony as a friend.

The influence exercised by Talleyrand is inexplicable. Without political talent of the first order; without courage physical or moral, for in a critical situation he invariably trembled; without party, for he was hated by the royalists, and distrusted or despised by all others; overwhelmed with debts, in spite of the liberalities of Napoleon, upon which alone he subsisted; with only a happy turn for epigram, the eloquence of dissimulation, and the genius of intrigue; he made himself first confederate to the emperor of Russia, helped to change a dynasty, and became lord of the ascendant under the new, or more properly the restored, order of things. His great superiority seems to have consisted in the skill with which he employed suitable means to act upon an immoral mass of opinion and motive, with which alone he, in this instance, had to do.

Whilst these transactions were passing at Paris, lord Wellington and marshal Soult were engaged in a final and useless expenditure of blood and

valour at Toulouse. There is something from which the mind shrinks at last, in the monotonous rapidity of successive scenes of carnage during this short campaign. Of the last it will suffice to say, that lord Wellington attacked Soult in his fortified posts at Toulouse on the 10th of April, partially dislodged him after several sanguinary attacks, and that after the interval of a day, it was found that Soult had retired during the night. The decisive events at Paris are supposed to have been known to both, but both were eager to have a last trial of prowess — the one to re-assert, the other to recover, his superiority.

One of the most obvious conclusions from an attentive perusal of Napoleon's campaigns is, — the moderate scale of capacity, with very few exceptions, among his marshals, and his own towering unapproachable genius. It is particularly striking in the campaigns of 1813 and 1814. He found it impossible to inspire his lieutenants with any portion of even his own energy, still less could he raise them to the level of his views.

Napoleon, in pursuance of a treaty with the allies, left Fontainbleau on the 20th of April for the island of Elba. He conducted himself with firmness and feeling both on his departure and during his journey. The numberless descriptions of his behaviour on leaving Fontainbleau, and during his route, contain much fable and still more calumny.

Louis XVIII. at the same time made a triumphal entry into London, and was congratulated by the prince regent previously to his embarking in a royal yacht, convoyed by the duke of Clarence, for

France. He was received at Paris with sincere rejoicing by some, with hollow and exaggerated demonstrations by others; and, having granted (not accepted) a constitutional charter, ascended the throne of his ancestors.

Declarations of adhesion had already poured in upon the provisional government, from the marshals and other military commanders, and were now followed by boundless professions of love for the Bourbons, and abhorrence of "Bonaparte." France exhibited at this moment extensive proofs of individual and national demoralisation. In the army this shameless versatility was confined to persons in high command. The younger officers and the mass of the troops were more true to their principles and attachments; but the non-military, especially those employed in the civil service of the public departments, and the tradesmen who had the remotest hope of patronage, prostituted themselves with a degree of infamy beyond example.

On the 30th of May, a definitive treaty of peace was signed between the allied powers at Paris. The negotiations which led to it, and the provisions which it contained, do not require particular mention. It will suffice to say, that France was reduced within her ancient limits, as before the revolution.

The fall of Napoleon and the French empire, and the return of peace, were hailed in England with exultation. Lord Castlereagh, on presenting himself in the house of commons for the first time since his return from the Continent, was received with cheers. There were no limits to the

enthusiasm excited by the presence of lord Wellington, now created a duke, with a splendid public provision voted to him by parliament. The parliament had already voted him a grant of 100,000*l.* The chancellor of the exchequer, now moved a further grant of 300,000*l.* out of the consolidated fund, to be laid out in the purchase of an estate for the duke of Wellington. Mr. Whitbread and Mr. Ponsonby thought the grant too small, and, on their suggestion, it was increased to 400,000*l.* The duke of Wellington's services had certainly merited his honours and rewards: he was compared with the duke of Marlborough, in parliament, and the comparison was echoed by the public. The house of commons proposed to confer upon him the unprecedented distinction of sending a deputation to offer him its thanks, and congratulations on his return to his country. The duke expressed a wish to receive and acknowledge, in person, the thanks and congratulations of the house. The 1st of July was appointed for that purpose.

It may be proper to describe in detail this unprecedented and unique scene: —

Lord Castlereagh stated, that in consequence of the intimation of the house, the duke of Wellington was in attendance.

The speaker asked — "Is it the pleasure of the house that his grace be called in?"

A loud and universal "Ay!" decided the affirmative — The huzzas in the lobby announced the duke's approach. On his entrance, dressed in a field-marshal's uniform, profusely decorated with

military orders, and bowing repeatedly to the house, all the members, uncovered, rose, and enthusiastically cheered him.

The speaker addressed him — "My lord, the house has ordered a chair to be placed for you to repose on."

The duke seated himself in the chair, and put his hat on. The members of the house then seated themselves. The duke instantly rose, took off his hat, and addressed the speaker to the following effect: — "Mr. speaker, — I was anxious to be permitted to attend this house, in order to return my thanks in person for the honour done me in deputing a committee of the house to congratulate me on my return to this country. After the house had animated my exertions by their applause on every occasion that appeared to them to merit their approbation; and after they had filled up the measure of their favours in the bill by which they followed up the gracious favour of his royal highness the prince regent in conferring upon me the noblest gift a subject has ever received, — I hope I shall not be thought presumptuous if I take this opportunity of expressing my admiration of the great efforts made by this house, and by the country, at a moment of unexampled pressure and difficulty, in order to support, on a great scale, those operations by which the contest in which we were engaged has been brought to so fortunate a conclusion. By the wise policy of parliament, government were enabled to give the necessary support to the operations carried on under my direction. The confidence reposed in me by his majesty's ministers

and by the commander-in-chief, the gracious favours conferred on me by his royal highness the prince regent, and the reliance I had on the support of my gallant friends the general officers, and the bravery of the officers and troops of the army, encouraged me to carry on the operations in which I was engaged in such a manner as to draw from this house those repeated marks of their approbation, for which I now return them my humble acknowledgments. Sir, it is impossible for me to express the gratitude which I feel. I can only assure the house, that I shall always be ready to serve my king and country in any capacity in which my services may be considered as useful or necessary."

Loud cheers followed this speech, at the conclusion of which, the speaker rose, took off his hat, and addressed the duke of Wellington as follows:— "My lord,—since last I had the honour of addressing you from this place, a series of eventful years have elapsed; but none without some mark and note of your rising glory. The military triumphs which your valour has achieved upon the banks of the Douro, and the Tagus, of the Ebro, and the Garonne, have called forth the spontaneous shouts of admiring nations. Those triumphs it is needless on this day to recount. Their names have been written by your conquering sword in the annals of Europe, and we shall hand them down with exultation to our children's children. It is not, however, the grandeur of military success which has alone fixed our admiration, or commanded our applauses; it has been that generous and lofty spirit which inspired your troops with unbounded confidence, and taught them to

know that the day of battle was always a day of victory; that moral courage and enduring fortitude, which in perilous times, when gloom and doubt had beset ordinary minds, stood nevertheless unshaken; and that ascendancy of character which, uniting the energies of jealous and rival nations, enabled you to wield at will the fate and fortunes of mighty empires. For the repeated thanks and grants bestowed upon you by this house, in gratitude for your many and eminent services, you have thought fit this day to offer us your acknowledgments; but this nation well knows that it is still largely your debtor. It owes to you the proud satisfaction, that amidst the constellation of illustrious warriors, who have recently visited our country, we could present to them a leader of our own, to whom all, by common acclamation, conceded the pre-eminence; and when the will of Heaven, and the common destinies of our nature, shall have swept away the present generation, you will have left your great name an imperishable monument, exciting others to like deeds of glory, and serving at once to adorn, defend, and perpetuate the existence of this country amongst the ruling nations of the earth. It now remains only that we congratulate your grace upon the high and important mission on which you are about to proceed, and we doubt not, that the same splendid talents, so conspicuous in war, will maintain with equal authority, firmness, and temper, our national honour and interests in peace."

During the speaker's address, the cheers were loud and frequent; and at the close of it there was a general and long-continued cheering. — The duke

then took his leave, bowing repeatedly as he retired, and all the members, as at his entrance, uncovered, rose, and cheered him.

Lord Castlereagh said.—"Sir, in commemoration of so proud and so grateful a day—a day on which we have had the happiness to witness within these walls the presence of a hero, never excelled at any period of the world, in the service of this or of any other country — in commemoration of the eloquent manner in which that hero was addressed from the chair, on an occasion which must ever be dear to Englishmen, and which will ever shed lustre on the annals of this house, I move, sir, that the address of field-marshal his grace the duke of Wellington, and your reply, be entered on the journals of this house."

The speaker put the motion, which was carried by acclamation.

Grants and peerages were at the same time bestowed as rewards on generals Hill, Beresford, Graham, Cotton, and Hope.

The popular intoxication at this period was excited to the highest pitch by the visit of the allied sovereigns of Russia and Prussia to the prince regent. They sailed from Boulogne to Dover in a man of war, under convoy of a fleet commanded by the duke of Clarence, landed at Dover with the usual honours, and with an extravagant display of public curiosity and enthusiasm, and arrived in London on the 8th of June.

Public business, private industry, and all care, seemed to be forgotten under the influence of the maddening hour; illuminations and fêtes lasted for several days. The two sovereigns made their cere-

monial visits to the prince regent, at Carlton House, on the day of their arrival; appeared at court next day; were invested with the order of the garter; and passed the evening at Carlton House, where the prince regent gave, in honour of their arrival, a fête got up with surpassing court splendour. A banquet on a scale of magnificent hospitality was given by the city of London to the prince and his guests; and upon their visiting the university of Oxford, that learned body harangued them in Anglo-Latin, and conferred on the prince regent, the two sovereigns, and several of their suite, honorary academical degrees. Among those who were thus distinguished was the Prussian field-marshal Blucher This general was peculiarly an object of curiosity and admiration to the London mob. There was something in his person, manners, and reputation, to make him the idol of a populace. He was a rude, illiterate, old soldier, with a certain approach to the brutal in his countenance and deportment; and he had made war with the boasting animosity of a man who had the loss of his reputation in a former campaign to retrieve and to avenge.

These public pageantries subjected the prince regent to some embarrassment and pain. The queen had announced that she should hold two drawing-rooms, in compliment to the imperial and royal visiters then expected to arrive. An intimation was given by the princess of Wales of her intention to be present. The queen, in reply, wrote a note to the princess, stating that her son, the prince regent, after mentioning the necessity of his being at court, desired it to be understood, "that for reasons of

which he alone could be the judge, it was his fixed and unalterable determination not to meet the princess of Wales on any occasion public or private." The princess entered into a correspondence with the queen, and addressed her complaints, through the speaker, to the house of commons.

The publication of these miserable quarrels, and the remarks to which they gave rise in the house, would alone have deeply mortified the prince; but he was further subjected, in the eyes of the sovereigns and their suites, to the humiliation of popular insult. The multitude received him with the unequivocal expression of his want of favour with them in the streets; and his unpopularity was such, that the announcement of his name at tavern meetings was never received with unmingled applause.

Peace was proclaimed, with the usual solemnities, through London and Westminster on the morning of the 20th of June, and celebrated during the day by a grand military review, at which were present the three sovereigns of England, Russia, and Prussia, and several of the generals most distinguished in the late war.

The emperor of Russia, the king of Prussia, and their train, sailed from Dover on the 27th of June.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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